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for

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND SOCIETY IN 1861.

BY F. ✓ GUIZOT.

"However dazzling and specious may be the designs which some potentates form with the intention of despoiling others of their property, estates, and possessions, and however effectual and advantageous the pursuit and success of such plans may become, they will, nevertheless, in the end, produce more censure than praise, more weariness than satisfaction, more hatred than good-will, more repentance than enjoyment; for such conquests must ever remain questionable"—HENRI IV. *Royal State Maxims*. [Royal Economies (Memoirs of Sully), Collection Petitot, vol. iv. p. 2.]



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CONTENTS.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. WHY THIS WAS WRITTEN	1
II. THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH	6
III. REAL DANGERS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH .	10
IV. OF THE SUPERNATURAL	16
V. THE TWO GODS	25
VI. THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY	28
VII. IN WHAT RELIGIOUS LIBERTY CONSISTS . .	32
VIII. OF THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE STATE AND THE CHURCH	34
IX. THE PROTESTANT CHURCH OF FRANCE . .	39
X. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND LIBERTY . .	49
XI. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ITALY . .	59
XII. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF FRANCE . .	64
XIII. THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES	71
XIV. CHRISTIAN SOCIETIES	77
XV. THE LAW OF NATIONS	83
XVI. THE INDEPENDENCE OF ITALY	87

CHAP.		PAGE
XVII.	LIBERTY IN ITALY	96
XVIII.	ITALIAN UNITY	103
XIX.	THE PAPACY	109
XX.	UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE IN ITALY	121
XXI.	THE ITALIAN CONFEDERACY	128
XXII.	FRANCE IN ITALY	141
XXIII.	THE FUTURE OF EUROPE — OUR ERRORS AND OUR HOPES	153
XXIV.	CONCLUSION	204

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
AND
SOCIETY

IN 1861.

CHAPTER I.

WHY THIS WAS WRITTEN.

I HAD no intention of writing what I now publish. Two personal incidents have imposed this duty on me.

On the 20th of April last, when presiding at the public meeting of the Society for the Encouragement of Elementary Education amongst the Protestants of France, I said:—“A lamentable perturbation infects and afflicts a considerable portion of the great and general Christian Church. I say, a lamentable perturbation; and by this phrase I express, and am

anxious to convey, my individual sentiment. Whatever may be our disagreements, and even our separations, we are all Christians, and the brethren of all who avow the Christian faith. The security, the dignity, the liberty of all Christian Churches, closely concern Christianity in its extended sense. Christianity at large suffers when the leading Churches suffer; the entire Christian edifice feels the blows directed, in these days, against any of the prominent buildings of which it is composed. Under such trials, the whole of the great Christian Church demands our sympathy."

These words have been very differently received and interpreted. Many Catholics have warmly thanked me for using them. Many Protestants have vehemently blamed and expressed uneasiness at them. Some of my most intimate friends, amongst the latter, have spoken of them with affectionate regret.

Three months before, on the 24th of January, 1861, when receiving, as president of the French Academy, Father Lacordaire, who had been elected a member, I had been led to advert to the events which agitate Italy, and used these words: — "We have, for nearly half a century, beheld Italy in prey

to commotions, invasions, and disorders resembling those which display themselves there at this moment; but then, at least, they appeared in their true character and features. A man who enjoyed much popular reputation, and whom the Liberals designated their chosen publicist,* when speaking of these and many other similar facts, qualified them as ‘the spirit of usurpation and conquest,’ and, under that title, wrote a work in their condemnation. Have the same facts ceased to deserve the same name? Have they changed their nature because it is no longer France who openly accomplishes them on her own account, and appropriates the fruits to herself? Or, rather, have these violences become lawful because to-day they are exercised in the name of democracy, and in virtue of what is called its will?”

A man of note in Italy, lately commissioner of King Victor Emmanuel in Tuscany, and now a deputy to the Italian parliament, M. Boncompagni, has done me the honour to address a letter to me in the “Bibliothèque Universelle” of Genoa†, announcing others, and in which, with much moderation and

* Mr. Benjamin Constant.

† No. 40, April 20th, 1861, pp. 555-601.

propriety, he disputes what I said before the Academy, and presents, under a totally different light, the events of which Italy is the theatre, their causes, their bearing, and their character.

I do not propose to enter, either with my Protestant friends or my honourable Italian correspondent, into a direct discussion of their claims and complaints. I have argued much throughout my life; but argument was then with me a necessity of political action. I sought for immediate results, and we all endured the salutary weight of the responsibility which that position imposes. When we speak to each other—not face to face, and in expectation of the adhesion we desire to obtain or the check we may be compelled to undergo—but from a distance, and in the freedom of solitude; when in place of having to decide, by a pressing debate, positive resolutions, we have only to criticise, at leisure, ideas and words, I attach little value to controversy, and am not inclined to embark in it. It is a tournament in which minds may be displayed, not a combat in which destinies are at stake. Self-loves excite and stimulate themselves in such contests, each according to its bent; while vanity is gratified, and triumphs much more than truth. But if I abstain from controversy

with them, I feel too much respect for the religious anxieties of the Protestants and the patriotic demands of the Italians not to hold both as of the utmost importance, before the public and in communion with my own soul. I wish to answer by a clear and complete exposition of my idea; and I owe this reply equally to them and to myself. I neither hope nor pretend to lead all to my own opinion; but I am most anxious to be understood by all. The moment, moreover, appears to me opportune. The religious and the Italian question strongly occupy men's minds, while facts present, for the moment, an interval of respite and repose. The sudden death of the eminent statesman who held in his bold and skilful hands the thread of Italian events, has, if not arrested, at least slackened their course. Since the decease of M. de Cavour, the opposing parties watch each other, and wait with anxiety: nothing is renounced, but the attack is suspended. If my words contain truth, and truth seasonably uttered, the more it appears alone, calm, and disconnected from personal debate, the greater will be its chances of a favourable reception.

CHAP. II.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

It is of the entire Christian Church that I think. It is to the whole Christian Church that I address my words.

Is it that I attach no importance to the dissensions and ruptures which have destroyed unity in the Christian Church, and that, in my eyes, there is no essential difference between Catholics and Protestants, Lutherans and Calvinists, members of the Church of England and Dissenters, simply because they are all Christians ?

Or can it be that I believe in a reconciliation, in a fusion which would re-establish amongst Christians religious unity, and that I pursue this object ?

Neither the one nor the other.

I am a Protestant from conviction and by descent. While teaching me justice, sympathetic justice, towards all Christians, the experience of life and the

study of history have confirmed me in the Church in which I was born. Without entering into questions of religious dogma, which would here be out of place, I feel convinced that, in spite of the commotions it has excited and the faults it has committed, the Reformation of the sixteenth century has rendered two immense services to the modern world: it has re-animated Christian faith, even as regards its adversaries; it has impressed on European society, voluntarily or forcibly, a decisive movement towards liberty.

I do not believe that a fusion of the different Christian communities, and the religious union of the Christian world are possible events, for they would be neither sincere nor permanent. In spiritual order, I estimate as lightly the deceitful unity of the transaction as the constrained unity of the persecution. When God created man reflecting and free, he did not surrender to him the power of decision as to what was or was not truth; but he made variety of convictions his condition on earth, as he gave him diversity of liberty as his right. The human race is devoted to toil and struggle in the search after truth; not destined to repose in the bosom of truth.

Nevertheless, I persist in using the expression,—the Christian Church. Whatever may have been, and may still continue to be, our schisms and contests, our prejudices and aversions—Catholics or Protestants, Episcopalians or Presbyterians, national Churches or independent sects—I would say that, indifferent as well as zealous believers, we have all one common religious origin; we have all learned the same history, and have received from our parents, our teachers, and our associates, from the experience of life, and from the lessons of the school, the same impressions; we have thence contracted certain ideas and simultaneous sentiments, present and powerful in our souls, even without our own consciousness. This civilisation, which under different forms and in unequal degrees has developed itself amongst all the nations of Europe, and which is in progress of subduing the world, is essentially Christian. Despite its intestine discords, the religious association which has held, and still holds in the history of human nature, such an important place, is, and will continue to be,—the Christian Church. We all call ourselves, now and ever,—Christendom. In this term there is a moral and social unity which resists all differences, survives all contests, and binds all Chris-

tians together, whether they assemble to join in prayer, to debate on the conditions of salvation, or to quarrel for superiority.

He who attaches not a high value to this paramount tie, and who, while professing Christianity, forgets Christendom, is ignorant of the great fact of our history, neglects a most important duty, and exposes his own cause, to-day, to a weighty peril.

CHAP. III.

REAL DANGERS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

WHILE Catholicism is menaced in its external establishment, all Christianity is exposed, in its foundation and essence, to attacks still more serious and dangers still more urgent.

It belongs to intellectual order that such dangers should exhibit themselves. It is not against the Christian religion as a social institution — it is against the Christian faith itself that these attacks are directed. Materialists, pantheists, rationalists, historical critics, and sceptics, each with their own appropriate weapons, aim distinct, but simultaneous and continued, blows against dogmatic Christianity.

These blows are by no means new. Many times before, especially from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century, Christianity has been exposed to and has effectively resisted them. It has had its days of strength and weakness, of zeal and languor, of bril-

liancy and decline. It has defended itself alternately by the power of tradition and transformation, and, above all, by its natural and innate virtue. It has stood erect through all changes of fortune; it has survived innumerable wars. It will equally survive, I feel convinced, the war which is waged against it in the present day. But the evil of the war is great, even when the issue cannot be fatal. The minds of men suffer, society suffers, from the blows which Christianity receives, from its apparent weaknesses and from its wounds, although the latter are not mortal. It will not perish; but it requires to be well acquainted with its dangers, to face them boldly, and to combine all its strength to subdue them.

Amongst its adversaries there are some who invite this combination, and who, with a remnant of pious solicitude, feel uneasy at their own attacks. I read in an Essay by M. Edmund Scherer, entitled *The Crisis of Protestantism**, the following paragraph: "They imagine that all difficulties are solved, and believe that they catch a glimpse of the religious future of humanity, in a species of Christian rationalism, or of rational Christianity, which, without

* Published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15th May, 1861, p. 423.

excluding ardour, would leave to thought its full liberty. For my own part, I desire nothing better ; but I cannot refrain from asking, with some anxiety, whether Christian rationalism is indeed a religion. Is what remains in the crucible after the operation of analysis, really the essence of positive dogmas, or merely a *caput mortuum*? Does Christianity, rendered transparent to the mind, conformable to reason and conscience, still retain its inherent virtue? Does it not resemble deism, and has it not the same meagreness and sterility? Does not the power exercised by creeds reside in dogmatic formulas and in miraculous legends, as much as in their essentially religious contents? Is there not always something of superstition in true piety, and can true piety entirely dispense with those popular metaphysics, with that brilliant mythology, which is sought to be expelled from it? The elements which you attempt to separate from religion, are they not the alloy without which the precious metal becomes unsuited to the rough practice of life? Finally, when critical censure has rejected the marvellous as useless, and tenets as irrational ; when the religious sentiment on the one hand, and exacting reason on the other, shall have penetrated faith and transformed it by

assimilation; when no authority shall be recognised beyond that of individual conviction; when man, in a word, having torn asunder all veils and pierced through all mysteries, shall contemplate, face to face, the God he seeks after, will he not find that this God is nothing more than man himself — a personification of the conscience and reason of humanity? And will not religion, under the pretext of becoming more religious, cease to exist altogether?"

Another Protestant minister, a man of distinguished ability, and sincere in spirit, M. Colani, has recently said, "I also entertain opinions and ideas which, acquired in the midst of the struggles of thought, have become singularly precious to me. Without doubt, I wish to see them shared by my brethren, and I feel even capable of sacrifices to expand them around me. Nevertheless, if it depended on my will to see them suddenly adopted by all the members of our church, I declare before God that I should restrain myself. For I distinguish between the Gospel and my opinions on the Gospel. The word of Christ, which is spirit and life, is suited to all; it satisfies every intelligence, the highest as well as the least cultivated, the simplest and the most sublime; it answers to every state of the soul;

it is eternally true, because it addresses itself even to the substance of our nature. My ideas, my opinions on the Gospel, I believe to be sound; but something tells me that they are imperfect, incomplete; that they are applicable to a particular state of mind; that experience will modify them; that if they satisfy me now, the time approaches when they will cease to do so entirely; and that, consequently, they can only really satisfy those who are in the same state with myself at this moment; those who have the same tendencies, and the same intellectual wants.”*

In contemplating the honest anxiety which accompanies such an animated attack, I feel a sentiment of melancholy esteem for the aggressors, and of confidence in the cause assailed. It thus appears that the rationalists and sceptics themselves question the conclusive merit of their reasoning, and of their doubts; they labour, as they say, to rationalize the Christian religion, and they tremble, lest in the effort the very essence of the religion should perish!

I have no desire to quote here other names; but I feel persuaded that amongst the materialists, pantheists, and historical critics, those who are serious

* *Le Lien*, Number for the 4th of May, 1861.

and sincere, and undoubtedly many are so, would exhibit the same uneasiness if we could read their hearts.

Whence does this uneasiness proceed? Why such disquiet in so many elevated minds, in the midst of their own work? It is that, according to the fine expression of Montesquieu, they accomplish much more than they have undertaken or desired? Under the blows they aim against the dogmas of Christianity the whole religious structure is shaken, the entire social edifice totters; the empire, the very essence of religion, disappears; the human soul feels itself disinherited, and ready to expire with its faith.

I wish to probe and expose to light the deadly wounds inflicted on the Christian Church by these attacks, at once timid and violent, of its various adversaries, — the wounds in which the evil dwells and concentrates. There are two that take the lead.

CHAP. IV.

OF THE SUPERNATURAL.

ALL the attacks of which Christianity is at the present day the object, however they may differ in their nature and degree, proceed from one point and tend to the same end,—a denial of the supernatural in the destinies of man and of the world, the abolition of the miraculous element in the Christian religion, as in every other, in its history as in its dogmas.

Materialists, pantheists, rationalists, sceptics, scholastic critics, some openly, others with reserve, all think and speak under the dominion of this idea,—that the world and man, moral and physical nature, are uniformly governed by general, permanent, and necessary laws, the course of which no special will has ever interfered with, or ever will interfere with, to suspend or modify.

I do not here propose to discuss at full length this question which forms the basis of all religion; I

merely wish to submit to the declared enemies of supernatural agency two observations, or, to speak more correctly, two facts, which, according to my idea, decide the point.

It is upon a natural belief in the supernatural, on an innate instinct of the supernatural, that all religion is founded. I do not say all idea of religion, but all positive, practical, powerful, durable, and popular religion. In all places, under all climates, in all epochs of history, under all degrees of civilization, man carries within himself this sentiment, I should rather say this pre-sentiment, that the world he looks upon, the order in the bosom of which he lives, the facts which succeed each other regularly and constantly around him do not comprise, within themselves, everything; in vain does he make from day to day, in this vast whole, discoveries and conquests; in vain does he observe and learnedly verify the permanent laws which preside there; his imagination does not confine itself within this universe submitted to his science; the spectacle fails to satisfy his soul, which plunges beyond it; it seeks and obtains a glimpse of something else; it desires, both for the universe and itself, other destinies and another master.

Voltaire has said that "beyond all these heavens the God of the heavens dwells;" and the God who is beyond all the heavens is not nature personified, he is the supernatural in person. It is to him that religions are addressed; it is to place man in relation with him that they are founded. Without the instinctive faith of men in the supernatural, without their spontaneous and invincible impulse towards the supernatural, religion could not exist.

Man is the only being in this lower world that prays. Amongst his moral instincts, there is none more natural, universal, and unconquerable than that of prayer. The child inclines to it with eager docility. The old man returns to it as to a refuge from decay and loneliness. Prayer ascends spontaneously from the infant mouth which can scarcely murmur the name of God, and from the dying lips which no longer retain strength to utter it.

Amongst all nations, whether eminent or obscure, civilized or barbarous, we meet, at every step, acts and forms of invocation. Wherever human beings exist, under particular circumstances, at specified hours, under the empire of certain impressions of the soul, eyes are raised, hands are joined together, knees are bent, to supplicate or to return thanks,

to adore or to appease, with extasy or apprehension, publicly or in the recesses of the heart; man ever turns to prayer as a last relief, to fill up the voids in his soul, or to enable him to bear the burdens of his destiny; when all resources fail, he seeks in prayer a support for his weakness, consolation for his distress, and hope for his enduring constancy.

No one denies the moral and innate value of prayer, independently of its efficacy in its immediate object. From the act of praying alone, the soul derives relief, tranquillity, and strength; it experiences, in turning towards God, that feeling of a return to health and repose which expands over the body when it passes from a heavy and stormy air to a serene and pure atmosphere. God comes in aid of those who implore Him before they can know and without their knowing that he has listened to their supplication.

Will He listen to them? What is the external and conclusive efficacy of prayer? Herein lies the mystery, the impenetrable mystery, of the designs and actions of God on all his creatures. We know that, whether in reference to our external or internal life, it is not we alone who regulate it according to our own thoughts and wishes. All the names that

we apply to that portion of our destiny which comes not from ourselves,—chance, fortune, star, nature, fatality—are nothing more than veils thrown over our ignorant impiety. When we speak thus, we refuse to see God where he is. Beyond the narrow sphere within which the power and actions of man are restrained, it is God who reigns and acts. There is in the natural and universal action of prayer a natural and universal faith in this permanent and ever free action of God over man and his destiny. “We are labourers with God,” says St. Paul, labourers with God, both in the work of the general destinies of the human race and in that of our individual destiny, present and future. This is what prayer reveals to us on the tie which unites man to God; but here our light pauses: “God’s ways are not our ways;” we walk in them without knowing them; to believe without beholding, and to pray without foreknowing, is the condition which God has prescribed to man in this world, with respect to all that exceeds its limits. Faith and a religious life consist in the conviction and acceptance of this supernatural arrangement.

In this sense, M. Edmond Scherer is right when he doubts whether “rationalistic Christianity is or

ever can be a religion." And why has M. Jules Simon, who bows before God with such heartfelt respect, entitled his book *Natural Religion*? He ought rather to have called it *Religious Philosophy*. Philosophy pursues and reaches some of the grand ideas on which religion founds itself: but by the nature of its proceedings, and the limits of its domain, it has never founded, and never can found, a religion. To speak exactly, there is no such thing as natural religion; for as soon as you abolish the supernatural, religion also disappears.

No one will attempt to deny that this instinctive belief in the supernatural, the source of religion, may be, and often is also, the source of an infinity of errors and superstitions; and that they, in their turn, are productive of many evils. In this, as in all other cases, it is the condition of man that good and evil mingle incessantly in his destinies and works, as in himself; but it does not follow from this inevitable mixture that our prevailing instincts are irrational, and bewilder while they exalt us. Whatever may be our wanderings under this excitement, it is certain that the supernatural belongs to the natural faith of man, and forms the *sine quâ*

non condition, the true object, the very essence of religion.

I come now to a second point, or I ought rather to say, a second fact, which demands, as I think, the full attention of the adversaries of the supernatural.

It is admitted, and proved by science, that our globe has not always been in the state in which it is at present; that at various and undetermined epochs it has undergone revolutions and transformations which have changed its face, its physical system, its population; that man, in particular, has not always existed upon it, and that in several of the successive conditions through which it has passed, it was impossible that he could have existed.

How, then, did he arrive there? By what means and through what power has the human race commenced upon earth?

There can be but two explanations of man's origin: either he has been produced by the proper and innate labour of the natural forces of matter, or he is the work of a supernatural power, external to and superior to matter. His appearance here below requires one of two causes — spontaneous generation or creation.

But even admitting, what for my own part I distinctly deny, spontaneous generation, this mode of origin could not produce, and never could have produced anything but infant beings in the first hour and first state of commencing life. No one, I believe, has ever said, or is likely to say that, by virtue of spontaneous generation, man, or rather man and woman, the human pair, could have emanated or ever did emanate at once from the bosom of matter entirely formed and grown, in full possession of their stature, their strength, and all their faculties, as Greek paganism has made Minerva spring from the brain of Jupiter.

It is, nevertheless, under this condition alone that, in appearing for the first time on earth, man could have lived or established himself there, or have founded the human race. Let us figure to ourselves the first born man in a state of early infancy, living but inert, unintelligent, helpless, incapable of supplying his own wants, trembling and moaning, with no mother to hear or nourish him. Yet this is the only first man which the system of spontaneous generation can supply.

Evidently, then, the other origin of the human race is alone admissible, and alone possible. The

supernatural fact of creation only can explain the first appearance of man in this lower world.

Those, therefore, who deny and abolish the supernatural, abolish with the same blow all true religion; and vainly do they triumph over the supernatural agency so frequently introduced into our world and history; they are compelled to pause before the supernatural cradle of humanity, unable to deliver man from it without the hand of God.

CHAP. V.

THE TWO GODS.

IN addition to direct and declared war against the supernatural, another evil assails the Christian religion in its very heart.

Paganism, under all its forms, whether cosmological or mythological, mystical or poetical, has this essential and common characteristic—that it is man himself who becomes or makes God. We find in paganism the vague idea of a primitive and supreme deity, concealed afar off in the depths of the universe; but the God or gods who are really the object of religion, who live in relation with man—the God or gods who are revered and implored, are nothing more than personifications of man or of nature; human heroes, or great human faculties and passions; the active forces of the universe elevated to the Divine condition and to the honours of religious worship. In all these religions, the real and living God or gods who

preside over the destinies of man and of the world, are of natural origin and human creation.

It is, on the contrary, the inherent and fundamental feature of Christianity in its biblical cradle and throughout all its history, that God does not in any manner appear there through the medium of man or nature. The God of the Jews and Christians is neither a personification of the forces of nature, of the faculties or passions of man, or of the heroes of the human race. He has created both man and nature; he existed before them, and retains an essentially distinct and independent being. He is the original, only, and eternal God, self-subsistent, and at the same time active, present in all all times and places, governing and maintaining all that he has created, and to whom alone the faith and worship of his creatures is addressed. This is the true God.

If this were the suitable place, I could readily show all that this inherent and fundamental characteristic of biblical and Christian religion comprises; as the monuments of that religion declare, and as its followers believe, it is God himself who is therein revealed, who speaks and acts, who creates and governs the world. But I only desire at present to

confront the two principles — the two Gods, if I may be allowed so to express myself — in which are included the double religious history of humanity : on the one side idolatry, on the other Christianity.

This is the point we have now reached, and whither the wind of the age impels us. No attempt is made to bring us back to any specific form of the idolatry which elevated into God the heroes of the human race, the great faculties of man, or the forces of nature ; but we are called upon to abandon the God of the Bible and the Gospel — the original, independent, personal, and distinct Deity, the creator of man and of the world ; and we are, at the same time, required to accept for all religion an abstract God who is also an idol of human invention, for he is no other than man and the world confounded and erected into God by a science which believes itself profound, and would fain not be considered impious. In place of Christianity, its history and dogmas, those grand solutions of our destiny and sublime hopes of our nature, they offer to us pantheism, scepticism, and the embarrassments of human learning.

CHAP. VI.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

IN presence of these attacks and dangers which assail the very essence of Christianity, all Christians have evidently a great common interest and duty. It is their general faith and religious country that they are called upon to defend. They dwell in different places; but it is the fortress in which all are contained that is besieged.

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the Reformation plunged the Christian world into a ferment, the fundamental dogmas of Christianity were not in question, and remained the same for all believers. They differed and quarrelled upon the Lord's Supper, the infallibility of the Pope, confession, purgatory, and the celibacy of the priesthood; but all believed in creation, in original sin, in the incarnation, and redemption. They could surrender themselves up to their various creeds without renouncing

or endangering their common faith. They contested in the bosom of their religious country; they neither exposed it to strangers, nor invited them to enter it. To-day, the stranger is everywhere at the gates of the Christian Church, prepared and eager to profit by its disputes for the purpose of invasion and disparagement.

The Christians of the present day have not only a pressing interest in peace, but they can live in peace, for they possess liberty. In the sixteenth century, and as long as religious liberty was wanting, it was necessary to fight for the preservation and profession of faith; war was the consequence of tyranny and the necessity of religion. No one could be a Protestant in France, or a Catholic in England, unless he resisted by force Louis XIV. or the parliament of Charles II. In these times, wherever religious liberty is admitted, religious peace is possible. Free in their different creeds, Christians are able, and ought, while maintaining them, to watch also over the common interests of the Christian Church: in ceasing to persecute and oppress each other, they can and ought to interchange mutual respect and support.

I know, and I acknowledge the fact with regret, that religious liberty, the conquest and treasure of

modern civilisation, was not introduced and established by believing Christians. Not that this liberty was opposed, I will not say to the principles, but to the traditions of Christianity; it has had, at all times, in the Christian Church, avowed partisans and defenders. In the fourth century, glorious Catholic Bishops, St. Hilary of Poitiers and St. Martin of Tours, raised their voices against religious persecution; in the sixteenth century, William of Nassau, *the Silent*, the founder of Protestant Holland, maintained, in opposition to a great majority of his friends, toleration for all Christian communions. In all epochs the history of Christianity presents to us instances of those rare and exalted souls who comprehend and claim the rights of conscience and of human dignity. But it is true that the Christian Church has not achieved liberty by its innate virtue and exertions; it is the human mind which, elevating and enfranchising itself, has also enfranchised man's conscience; it is laical society which, by seeking justice and freedom for itself, has bestowed, or I might say, imposed, the same privileges on religious society. I add that, in the existing state of minds and manners, laical society, and the powers which regulate it, are alone capable of protecting

and maintaining religious liberty for the advantage of all. If, in presence of religious controversies and passions, that liberty, more holy than any other, should be placed under the control, and left to the discretion of the religious authorities themselves, it would be, I fear, in all quarters, seriously compromised. It is owing to the maxims of civil society, and to the vigilant action of the civil powers, that this liberty is now, in the modern world, a fact accomplished, or on the point of accomplishment, and the only fact which can assure, to religious society, peace in the bosom of division.

CHAP. VII.

IN WHAT RELIGIOUS LIBERTY CONSISTS.

RELIGIOUS liberty is the liberty of thought, of conscience, and of life, in matters of religion ; the liberty of believing or of not believing ; the liberty of philosophers as of priests and of true Christians. The State owes to all the same security in the exercise of a common right.

In what does the right itself consist ? Or, to speak more correctly, what are the different rights comprised in and conferred by the principle of religious liberty ?

The right, as regards individuals, of professing their faith and of exercising their worship, of connecting themselves with any religious association they may prefer, of continuing with or of leaving it.

The right, as regards different churches, of organising and governing themselves internally according to the maxims of their faith and the traditions of their history.

The right, both for the followers and the ministers of the different Churches, of teaching and propagating by moral and intellectual influence, their faith and worship.

In common with all other rights, these are susceptible of abuse and encroachment; they may, in the contact of opposite creeds within the bosom of the same society, mistake their limits, and reciprocate attacks. The State ought to watch over their exercise, and should the necessity arise, impose on them certain securities for the public peace. But judging things in themselves, and abstracting all local or casual circumstances, it is indisputable that individual liberty of conscience and worship, the liberty of the internal organization and government of churches, the liberty of religious association, of religious teaching, and of the propagation of faith, are inherent in the principle of religious liberty; and that this principle becomes real or nominal, productive or barren, according as it bears or fails to bear these various consequences, as it receives or fails to receive these opposite applications.

CHAP. VIII.

OF THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE STATE AND THE
CHURCH.

It is affirmed that complete religious liberty is only possible on the condition that the State and the Church should be completely separated and independent of each other. A wish has been expressed that no public tie should be established between them, that the State should neither give to the Church, nor the Church receive from the State any special position or stipend; that the members of the different churches, priests or followers, should merely be, in the eyes of the State, simple citizens, who arrange their religious affairs in common, as other communities associate for their temporal concerns.

If complete religious liberty could only exist at this cost, it would be a lamentable consequence of an excellent principle, for both religious and civil society would thus lose much moral authority, dignity

and security. We can neither mistake nor offend with impunity the nature of things. Religious associations and creeds are, in general society, facts and influences of the first order. In acknowledging them officially and in securing to them means of dignity and stability, the State only renders homage to their natural importance, and assigns to them, in social order, the rank which is their due.

When civil and religious society remain entirely disconnected, and mutually ignore each other, both become weakened and abased. Having no relations except with the temporal affairs and interests of men, the civil power loses the moral force naturally imparted to it by the bond of religious principles and sentiments; while, in their turn, the spiritual directors of the different churches are reduced, even amongst communities of their own faith, to a subordinate and precarious state; they are exposed to all the instability of opinion, to the thoughtlessness and insolence of human inclinations. The contrast becomes painfully striking between the loftiness of their mission and the weakness of their actual situation. In this mutual isolation, the State materializes itself, and the Church, if we may so speak, becomes more and more divided and unsettled. Civil

order loses sanction, and religious order declines in dignity and stability.

Absolutely separated from the State, the Church incurs another danger: it falls readily into exaggeration of doctrines and precepts. It loses a conviction of the legitimate necessity of civil order; it fails in experience and temperance; in the name of its divine origin and moral mission, it becomes hard and intractable towards human feelings, and the ordinary interests of life. We find sectarians and mystics, but not Christians.

Society, moreover, does not entirely subsist on liberty. Neither religious nor civil order can dispense with every model of strong and permanent organization. Religious as well as civil associations aspire and ought to aspire to consistency and durability. It is not enough for them to offer to the passing generations on the earth a momentary hospitality under shifting tents; they must construct edifices in which succeeding races may dwell with confidence under a substantial shelter.

I hasten to repeat, and no one is more convinced of the fact than I am — it is necessary that the tents should be freely erected around the buildings; that the church or churches in alliance with the State, should not be permitted to oppose any obstacle to

the formation of other churches who prefer isolation to alliance. It is necessary that civil and religious society should remain professedly distinct, without the power of mutual invasion or oppression. But it is not necessary, to escape this peril, that they should become absolutely strangers to each other, and no longer be able, for the common honour and advantage of both, to contract public ties and interchange reciprocal support. The merit of such an alliance depends on the terms under which it is contracted. These terms may possibly be contrary to the essential rights of both Church and State, and thus become a source of disorder and oppression. It has happened more than once, under the influence of human egotism, that the Church and State, by alliance, have mutually surrendered their rights and liberties. Some celebrated concordats have furnished examples of this. But it is not a necessary condition of the alliance; it does not lead as an inevitable consequence to the establishment of a State religion fatal to liberty, or of a civil despotism in spiritual matters. These unjust results have taken their source from the errors of the times and the evil passions of men, not from the nature of things and situations. The public tie between the State and

the Church, by no means requires that the individual liberty of minds should be shackled; neither does the public character assigned by the State to the ministers of the Church, of necessity entail their dependence. The course of events and the progress of ideas have deeply impressed both on Church and State the fatal results of ill-conceived alliances, but they have not demonstrated the necessity of separation. Taught by experience, and each more faithful to its true mission, the two communities can readily become reconciled to one another while remaining distinct, and render mutual support while preserving their respective rights and liberties. It is thus alone that social and religious order can ascend and acquire strength together; and thus only, in both, are ideas, institutions, and persons, raised to their natural elevation, and enabled to exercise their salutary influence while preserving their lawful rank. Have we at present reached this point? Is the alliance between Church and State in the Christian world, and especially in France, all that it can and ought to be? Does the Christian Church, and do all sects of Christians enjoy in principle, as in fact, in their relations with the State, all the liberties and guarantees to which they are entitled? I am far from adopting this opinion.

CHAP. IX.

THE PROTESTANT CHURCH OF FRANCE.

THE French Protestant Church suffers from the same evil which afflicts the whole Christian Church. The attacks directed against Christianity by the materialists, pantheists, sceptics, and scholastic critics, apply equally to Protestants and Catholics. The Protestant church is, moreover, agitated and divided within itself; it contains orthodox followers, latitudinarians, rationalists, deists, separatists, settled and wavering adherents. We encounter within its ranks animated faith and indifferent doubt, attachment to traditions, and an impulse towards novelties; an intention to maintain and a desire to sever the alliance between Church and State.

Some say that this state of Protestantism indicates a crisis which must either end in its ruin and in that of Christianity itself, or in some dissolving and

enervating transformation, which, even in the estimate of those who urge it on, could scarcely retain the name of a religion. According to others, on the contrary, this latitude and variety in religious ideas and tendencies, this mixture of defined faith and vague belief, of persevering tradition and continued innovation, is the normal state, the true essence of Protestantism; it ought not only to accept, but cling to it as to its principle and right, admitting no general and permanent confession of faith, and considering every attempt to settle a uniform doctrine, either for pastors or flock, as a blow struck against liberty. Others again energetically reject this latitude, this unlimited mobility, which, in their eyes, is nothing more than spiritual anarchy; they respect and receive in its full extent the religious liberty secured by civil law, but they do not admit from thence that the Protestant Church should become an open arena for the most incoherent and even contradictory doctrines and discourses. According to them, it is a true church, which has its defined faith written in the sacred books, and consecrated by tradition and history; it has an indisputable right to maintain itself such as it has hitherto subsisted, and to support according to its rules, the men it

calls from its own bosom to a ministry of Christian preaching and instruction.

I recognise the crisis to which, in common with all Christianity, Protestantism is, in these days, exposed: it is painful and perilous, but neither for Protestantism nor for Christianity do I fear that it will be definitive or fatal. As a religion, Protestantism is essentially Christian, and under this view it is not of human creation, and it belongs not more to man to destroy than it was given to him to create it. As an event, the Reformation of the sixteenth century was determined by a multitude of causes and necessities moral and social, which endowed it with a force capable of surmounting the rudest trials of time and fortune; and the attacks it has already survived, are at least equal to those it encounters at present. Protestantism has already experienced more than one crisis, sometimes from violent shocks, at others from languor and decay. It has been subjected to religious anarchy, philosophic doubt, erudite criticism, worldly indifference and fickleness. It has gone through these numerous vicissitudes without perishing in the midst of them; its roots are too deeply planted to be torn up. We find amongst the fables of the Pagan mythology, that in his struggle

with Hercules, the giant Antæus, son of Terra (the Earth), had only to touch his mother with his foot to recover his strength. Christianity has received its powers, not from earth but from heaven, and when it is threatened with their extinction, it is by again uniting itself to heaven, to its supernatural source, that it regains them. In the dissensions which agitate the Protestant Church of France, the orthodox followers possess the merit of a firm belief in the supernatural, and of thus placing their faith in its true home, above the blows of its adversaries. And they are right in desiring that this faith should form the basis of the Church, for it is on this foundation alone that a Christian Church can establish itself, and legitimately assume that name. They are right also in thinking that to say "a Church," is to say a common religious creed in which souls unite, and that confessions of faith are only the expressions of that union. There is nothing in this fact beyond what is perfectly natural and legitimate. It would be neither natural nor legitimate to persist in wishing to form part of a Church, without partaking its faith, and even by endeavouring to introduce into it a contradictory creed. If Luther and Calvin, when preaching the Reformation, had pretended to remain

always Catholics, the Church of Rome would have had strong reason for astonishment; and if she had then felt the justice of acknowledging religious liberty, she might have fairly said to them: "Call upon those who believe as you do, but do not remain personally in a Church which your souls refuse to acknowledge."

Nevertheless, I do not think that in the actual state of Protestantism, orthodox Protestants are called upon to apply with vigour a principle legitimate in itself, and, in these days, to make a precise and formal confession of faith the absolute rule of their Church. Two motives, one of equity and prudence, the other of strict public right, equally interdict this course.

Dogmatic Protestantism has been reproached, not without reason, with a want of consideration and gentleness, with pushing all things to extremes, and with forgetting the spirit of Christianity to fall into that of sectarianism. The error, in our age, would be more serious and inopportune than ever. In the religious movement which at present agitates French Protestantism, the combat is still extremely confused, and many persons, otherwise serious and sincere, do not entertain, on their own individual faith, firmly

established ideas and resolutions. Some, recently escaped from indifference, express astonishment at certain specific creeds, presented to them as essential to Christianity; others, infected by orthodox zeal with impatient ardour, entertain anxious alarms for religious liberty; a great number who are honestly uncertain and uneasy, and with a sincere desire to be Christians, hesitate to enter into, or pause in the paths of orthodoxy, doubting whether they are really Christian ways. In expelling from its bosom all those Protestants, whether pastors or disciples, who are prepossessed with these anxieties or doubts, the Protestant Church would show itself wanting in equity, and would incur the risk of seeing its ranks too much thinned. It becomes it to show itself moderate and patient, to admit all shades to their due portion, to labour without premature urgency to convince those who doubt, to re-assure those who fear, and to depend, for the progress of faith, on the empire of truth and time, while paying due respect to freedom of action.

Law commands, moreover, what equity and prudence recommend. The Protestant Church of France is too incompletely organized and too imperfectly free for authority to exercise itself in its interior government

with an indisputable character and without fear of compromising liberty.

The interior organization of the Protestant Church of France, like its faith, does not date from yesterday. It has enjoyed, ever since its foundation, an appropriate and regular government, consistories and synods, composed of laymen and ecclesiastics, of pastors and disciples debating and deciding together on the local and general affairs of the establishment. This religious constitution of French Protestantism has been in vigour throughout the whole course of its history, even at the time when it saw its liberty contested, attacked, and progressively destroyed. It was formerly recognized by the organic articles which in 1802 reconstructed the Christian Churches in France and regulated their relations with the State. The provincial consistories and the local synods are equally protected by this law. It makes no mention of a general synod, but it does not exclude it. Its silence on this point is easily explained: while restoring Christianity to its position in the State, the consular government and the public of that period, in common with the legislative power, dreaded its full and active liberty; above all, its assemblies. The old internal constitution of the Pro-

testant Church was acknowledged in principle, but incompletely admitted in practice; the local consistories alone received actual existence; on certain special and rare occasions, some principal synods were authorised to re-assemble; the general convocation never appeared. We are at the same point to-day. The personal organization of the Protestant Church continues imperfect and mutilated; that Church does not yet possess the religious government bequeathed to it by its history and promised to it by the new laws.

Neither does French Protestantism enjoy the full liberty to which it is entitled. This right is not entirely confined to the Protestant Church as acknowledged and supported by the State. The formation of dissenting churches which, from motives of creed or worship, separate from the Church officially constituted, and live by themselves, without demanding any privilege beyond this freedom, belongs equally to the nature of Protestantism and to the rights of civil order. But according to the laws now in vigour, these churches although called *free*, cannot constitute themselves or assemble without the formal authority of the government, which can always withhold its sanction. When these laws were

enacted, their real object was to destroy secret meetings and political associations; and it was then frequently asserted that religious liberty would in no manner be affected by them. But to prevent this consequence, and to enable religious liberty to preserve, at least, under the general restriction imposed on societies, effectual guarantees, it became essential that, when dissenting churches were formed, the question of ascertaining whether they were really and purely religious assemblies, divested of all political intrigue, should be submitted to an independent power; that is to say, to the ordinary tribunals. Now this question is, at present, entirely in the hands of the administration, which deciding solely on the fact thus disposes of the right; a proceeding which substitutes, as well for religious communities as for political associations, prejudice for restraint, and arbitrary interference for liberty.

Hence it arises, that, as regards French Protestantism, neither the internal nor external organization of the Church is yet complete or secure. The Protestant Church of France does not possess within itself the essential and independent authority which can alone establish general rules for its government; neither can it feel certain that if these rules were

instituted, those amongst the Protestants who might object to submit to them would be free to practice amongst themselves their own creed and form of worship. To enable spiritual authority to exercise itself firmly and without hesitation in the established Church, the full liberty of the dissenting churches requires to be assured; while the free existence of the dissenting churches is indispensable to secure an equitable and circumspect exercise of authority in the established Church. If dissent were not perfectly free, orthodoxy would readily become oppressive. In spiritual, as in temporal order, in the Church as in the State, power, to continue rational and legitimate, requires to be controlled and held in check by liberty.

CHAP. X.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND LIBERTY.

GREAT examples and lessons have never been wanting to the world, and no age has presented or received more than ours. But too often, now as well as formerly, they have offered themselves in vain; a deep cause for regret with thinking minds and honest dispositions. Nevertheless there are examples and lessons so great in themselves and so often repeated, that in the end they triumph over human thoughtlessness, and exercise a salutary influence upon the reflections and conduct of men.

I am inclined to hope that the events with which we are associated in our own days will possess this virtue. Never perhaps has experience spoken more loudly and intelligibly.

It is a commonplace and well-founded historical assertion that, since the sixteenth century, Catholicism has been, in general, hostile to freedom. Holding

authority as its fundamental principle, and seeing that principle violently attacked, it has too much forgotten and denied the rights of the corresponding principle in human nature and destiny,—liberty. During several centuries, Catholic spiritual power had often and effectively protected social privileges against temporal despotism; but when placed in question itself, and not trusting to its own inherent strength, this power has almost everywhere allied itself with absolute political power, and has supported it for its own defence.

Wherever this alliance has been carried out, religious and political liberty have equally suffered; conscience and society have lived under the yoke.

Men endure much and for a long time; but not everything and for ever. Against this double bondage, the spirit of resistance and of liberty finally broke out. According as the alliance of the two powers was more or less complete and determined, the struggle between them, amongst different Christian peoples, in Germany, in England, in Spain, in France, and in Italy, assumed very different aspects and vicissitudes, but everywhere ended in the same result; a little sooner or a little later, with more or less tumult and destruction, it has happened in all

countries, that the union contracted between absolute temporal and absolute spiritual catholic power to impose a common yoke, has been fatal to both. If, at the outset, they have derived some strength from it, they have soon found themselves thereby deteriorated and awakened. In all countries this union and its object have been condemned by experience; everywhere it has been made evident that if not a rupture of all ties between the State and the Church, at least a separation of their domains and of their mutual liberty, is indispensably necessary for their security as well as for their dignity and repose.

Christian Europe is now in this position.

This is a great step towards a better future, for Church as well as State, for religion and liberty. But we still waver in this path; to reassure us and to advance towards the end, we must watch zealously lest we should fall again into the old beaten track; the evil alliance between the two powers ought not to be suffered to recommence; civil liberty should be strenuously defended against the encroachments of religious influence, and religious freedom against those of civil authority; the Church and State must remain free and intact, each in its respective domain.

I sometimes picture to myself what might happen

if one day the supreme power of the Catholic Church, the Papacy, should accept, fully and openly, the principle of religious liberty. Not that of mental indifference, but of the incompatibility and absolute illegality of force in matters of faith. This principle does not touch any of the important bases of Catholicism, neither the unity nor spiritual infallibility of the Church and its head, nor any dogma essentially religious. It consists solely in recognizing the separation of civil and religious life, the authority of mind alone over mind, and the right of human conscience not to be governed, in its relations with God, by human decrees and punishments. We cannot estimate by anticipation the effect which the frank and firm introduction of this principle into the Catholic Church might produce in the civilized world. By its strong organization, by the splendour of its worship, by many of its institutions and maxims, that Church responds to powerful instincts of human nature. If it would seriously renounce, without reserve or theological subtilty, all alliance with absolute temporal power, all hostility against civil liberty, all appeal to physical constraint in spiritual order, it would receive much strength; for, without ceasing to be religiously itself, it would

return to social harmony with the present and the future.

Will this political reform of Catholicism take place? will there ever be at the head of the Catholic Church a powerful and commanding genius to proclaim its legitimacy and necessity? No one can tell. In that Church, amongst its followers and priests, favourable symptoms manifest themselves, and efforts are made to introduce and establish in the relations of civil and religious society a real and reciprocal liberty. But other symptoms and acts reveal, at the same time, in the bosom of Catholicism, a senseless obstinacy for the pernicious routines of ideas and language, which leads the ill-disposed and indifferent to exclaim, "You see plainly the case is beyond cure." Thus a dread of the absolute pretensions and traditions of Catholicism perpetuates itself; far from subsiding, the struggle between the State and the Church recommences; we are nearer to retrogression than to advance in the paths of justice and liberty.

During this unsettled crisis, while laical society and the Catholic Church, mutually suspicious, watch and sound each other, doubtful whether they can live in concord, what ought every rational government, every sincere and honest liberal to do? One

course alone remains to them as regards both interest and imperious duty. They are called upon to profess and practise, towards the various forms of liberty opposed to each other, a respect equally profound and resolute; to maintain all in common, and to endeavour by the authority of facts to dispel the mutual doubts and inquietudes which retard their peaceful co-existence.

Unfortunately, the facts in which we participate to-day, operate in precisely an opposite sense. Appearances and realities contradict each other; we hear songs of triumph re-echo in praise of religious freedom; it seems as if its hour had come, as if it were ready to pass into the universal fact as well as the admitted right of society; and this ebullition of liberality displays itself at the very moment when a serious blow is aimed against the religious liberty of a considerable portion of Europe!

I have said, and facts declare more loudly than my words, that religious liberty does not solely consist in the personal and isolated right of every man to profess his own faith. The internal constitution of the society in which men unite religiously, that is to say the Church, its mode of government, its relations with its ministers and followers, the rules and tradi-

tions which preside over it, form an integral portion of religious liberty; and wherever this liberty is proclaimed, it can only be real and complete when the Established Church and the different Churches enjoy it equally with individuals.

What would the Protestant Church of France say, if, in spite of its primitive institutions and history, in defiance of the law which recognises its synods, it should be told, "You shall have no synods, no superior and independent authority to regulate your internal and general affairs; each of your local churches shall remain isolated, and shall decide, according to its own pleasure, on questions which interest Protestantism at large?" If such language were held to the French Protestants, if their peculiar and traditional institutions were abolished, would they find their religious liberty complete? Would they consider their religious rights as sufficiently exercised and secured?

If the British Parliament, while leaving the Catholics perfectly free to profess their faith and practise their worship within the three kingdoms, were absolutely to interdict to the whole body, priests and laymen, all connection with the Papacy, and thus to destroy, as far as they are concerned, the

government of the Catholic Church by severing the ties which everywhere unite the head and the members, would religious liberty exist in England? Would the English Catholics hold themselves satisfied with the enjoyment of their individual religious liberty, when the general liberty of their Church was abolished?

Every one is aware that, independently of religious dogmas, two essential facts characterise the organization and position of the Catholic Church; it has a general and single head acknowledged by all Catholics whether assembled or dispersed amongst all the nations of the world; this head is at the same time the spiritual prince of all Catholicism, and the temporal sovereign of a small European state. A vehement debate is at present excited on this subject. Some assume that the union of these two characters is not necessary to the papacy, and that it may preserve its spiritual power without possessing any temporal sovereignty. Others maintain the necessity of the temporal power for the free and certain exercise of the spiritual supremacy.

I do not propose at present to enter into this debate, or to examine the system of government of the Catholic Church; I merely defend its liberty and its

right to that liberty. The double character of the Papacy is a fact consecrated by ages. This fact has developed and maintained itself through all the vicissitudes, struggles, and quarrels of Christianity. It is not alone the Catholic faith, but the Catholic Church itself. And upon this fact it is supposed that a violent hand may be laid, to alter and even to destroy it at pleasure, without striking a blow against the religious liberty of the Catholics! The spiritual head of the Catholic Church is to be despoiled of a character and position which that Church has looked upon for ages as the guarantee of its independence; and at the same time it is pretended that this extreme measure neither fetters nor mutilates Catholicism! And even more, it is asserted that the Catholic Church has never been free, and is now going to become so. *A free Church* is the principle proclaimed in the name of the State, at the moment when the State strips from the Church its constitution and its home.

I do not believe, on the part of a man of superior talent and character, in a cynical and derisive hypocrisy. I admit, as M. de Cavour has said and his friends have attested, that he really intended a serious and practical truth when he adopted the

maxim, "The Church free in a free country," for the programme of his policy. If, in labouring to conquer and establish the kingdom of Italy, he had merely declared, as did successively the various United States of the American republic, the absolute separation of the State and the Church, leaving the Catholic Church as he found it established, and in possession of its ancient institutions, he might have had some right to use this language: but to proclaim the Catholic Church free, when, in spite of itself, its possessions are invaded and wrested from it by force, to sport with its traditions and overthrow its foundations, supplies an example unparalleled in history of the presumptuous and tyrannical levity into which the most exalted intellects may fall when they abandon themselves to the intoxication of ambition and success.

CHAP. XI.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ITALY.

IF the Catholic Church had been only an Italian Church; if Catholicism had been confined within the limits of that beautiful country

“Ch’ Apennin parte, e ’l mar circonda, e l’Alpe,”

of that land which M. de Cavour undertook to conquer entirely for Piedmont, there would have been some plausible motive, some specious appearance in his language; he would only have touched spiritual order where he changed temporal order; he would only have attacked religious liberty where he established political unity, and the local Church, placed under the law of a new State, would have been the only sufferer by the change. But the Catholic Church is everywhere, without as within Italy, in the Old and in the New World; and in every quarter would the abolition of the temporal sovereignty of the Pope

change its condition and assail its liberties. If M. de Cavour, in the new Italian kingdom, had desired the absolute separation of Church and State, and the entire religious freedom of Catholicism in place of its alliance with the civil power,—it might have been admitted. I do not ask whether he would have been right or wrong; he would at least have acted within the limits of his political rights and of Italian sovereignty. But to adopt, as regards the Catholic Church, measures which everywhere change its constitution and position, which affect the Catholics of France, Germany, Spain, England, America, and the whole world, together with those of Italy; which prepossess and disturb the Catholic missionaries in the cities of China and in the islands of Oceania, as well as the ministers and believers in Paris and Madrid; to take from all these Churches, nations, and consciences, utterly strangers to the Italian kingdom, the ancient sovereignty, the old securities for the independence of the spiritual head of their religion, is, undoubtedly, one of the strangest acts of usurpation which history acknowledges or the mind can conceive.

Has the Catholic Church of Italy itself taken any part in this act? Has general Catholicism, beyond

the Alps, had its representatives, who have given to the policy of M. de Cavour, I do not say a formal consent, but even any colour, any appearance of religious adhesion? It is affirmed, and I am not astonished at it, that the Italian clergy have not, in a mass, exhibited the same repugnance, the same ardour of opposition to this policy, which have displayed themselves in other portions of the Catholic Church. The Papacy, it is said, is unpopular in Italy, and even amongst its natural defenders, many resign themselves coldly to its reversés. The national sentiment, the hope of seeing Italy at last delivered from the rule of the stranger, a newly-born impulse towards the old idea of Italian unity, and perhaps the general spirit of the age, either sincerely liberal or blindly revolutionary, have penetrated, it is said, the ranks of the Italian priesthood, and counter-balance the alarms inspired by the attacks directed against the Church. I do not dispute, for I well know the part that was taken by illustrious Italian Catholics, ecclesiastics and laymen, during the first inspiration and opening scenes of the great movement by which Italy is agitated; but, as ever happens in similar cases, they were far from foreseeing with what rapidity this movement would exceed their

views, and precipitate itself towards a revolution against the Church, followed up by passions and ambitions exclusively temporal. Despite the names and writings of the Abbés Gioberti and Rosmini, of Silvio Pellico and Manzoni, there is absolutely no religious element in what has passed and is now passing in Italy; it is not within the bosom of the Church, nor upon questions or dissensions of spiritual order, that the Italian ferment took rise and developed itself; whether good or evil, its tendencies are exclusively political; political powers have excited and continue to work it for their special advantage; the Catholic Church reckons for nothing in itself, with the acts and ideas which overthrew its organization and position; it has neither been consulted nor listened to; it bows under the wishes and blows of conquering foreigners who lay their hands upon and strike it even in countries remote from their conquests.

When light expanded upon these events, when they assumed their true character and direction, resistance was not wanting in the Catholic Church of Italy: resistance sometimes irrational and too indistinctly opposed to all reform, but sincere, courageous, and justly brought on by the violences and perils to which

the Church was exposed. The greater part of the Italian bishops and many priests loudly protested against or held themselves aloof from the movement; several resisted actively, and are still enduring, in exile, or under the weight of various penalties, the consequences of the struggle. Sentiments of an extremely mingled nature undoubtedly agitate the Catholic Church of Italy; its personal alarms have not extinguished its sympathetic instincts for national independence; but, in the midst of its perplexities, it is far from lending or even from resigning itself to a revolution which powers utterly foreign to spiritual order pretend to accomplish in its internal constitution and against its liberty.

CHAP. XII.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN FRANCE.

IN this great trial to which Catholicism is exposed, the Catholic Church of France has protested and resisted with superior energy and celebrity.

This was in due course; for three quarters of a century the French Catholic Church has been most frequently in action and under endurance. It has learned more than any other, because it has suffered more.

It has learned to measure the extent and to foresee the consequences of ideas and events. It has been taught to recognize from a distance the revolutionary and the anti-Christian spirit. Its own experience has taught it prudence, and fitted it for the struggle.

A mixture, a confusion, I might even say, a chaos of the most incoherent and contrary ideas, formed in 1789 the predominating danger of our fathers, as it still constitutes our own existing peril.

Nothing can be more incoherent than the spirit of liberty and the spirit of revolution, than respect for human dignity and aversion to authority. These are, notwithstanding, the dispositions we have often seen, and still often see confounded and mistaken for each other: a fatal mistake, which at first compromises and speedily tarnishes the good cause, and carries us far from the object towards which we believe we are advancing, and wish to advance.

What is true in political order applies equally to spiritual order; nothing assimilates less than respect for conscience and contempt for faith, religious liberty and irreligion. How many people hold these sentiments so totally incompatible, as naturally united and almost inseparable! Here, again, the confusion is equally frequent and fatal.

Under the influence of this chaos, of the events it has produced, and the instruction it has received from them, the Catholic Church of France has seen spring up and expand within its bosom very opposite dispositions, which manifest themselves whenever important circumstances call them into action.

The first and most universal of these dispositions is submission to political vicissitudes, and what is designated the force of events. The idea that religion

ought to hold itself apart from politics, and pursue its mission of morality and for the salvation of souls, whatever may be existing systems and dynasties, prevails more and more with the French clergy. They have practised it for sixty years, sometimes reluctantly, but at the same time under a conviction that they thus discharge their religious obligations, while they secure their social existence from the blows of fortune. By a very natural movement, generous minds have exclaimed against this imperturbable adhesion of the clergy to the most contradictory systems, and have charged them with egotistical weakness. Weakness and egotism have often their share in rational conduct, and the dignity of the clergy has suffered from their undefined political complaisance. On the whole, nevertheless, the attitude of the greater portion of the ecclesiastics under these circumstances has been regulated by a just sentiment of their situation and mission. The care of souls is, in fact, the true and important avocation of the Church, a paramount and permanent duty, through all the vicissitudes of the State. Men actively engaged in politics are inclined, moreover, to forget too readily revolutionary shocks, the dangers they have imparted to society, and the alarms they have in-

spired. Honest citizens unconnected with public life, societies charged with superintending the moral and civil interests of nations, retain a more lasting recollection of them, and look upon themselves as specially called upon to prevent their return. Hence arises their inclination to support power, whatever may be its name or form, as soon as it presents itself as the guardian of order and acquires some degree of regularity and permanence. This is the prevailing disposition of the clergy and magistracy in France; a disposition sincere and salutary in itself, but which frequently reduces these two great bodies to a subordinate attitude, and compromises their moral influence while raising doubts of their independence.

In conjunction with this modest prudence, our revolutions have provoked, in the Catholic clergy, a very different spirit: the spirit of reaction towards the old system both in Church and State. This spirit manifested itself under the Restoration, by rash efforts to force the government into retrograding paths; under the monarchy of 1830, by an ill feeling more obstinate than bold, and always by a systematic adhesion to the principles of absolute power and a declared hostility against the ideas and acts of 1789. A blind spirit which not only produced the effect of estranging

the Catholic clergy of France from the new French society, and of rendering them suspected, but which often placed them in a radically false position, for it led them by natural and pressing interests to demand on their own account the very liberties, which, in general hypothesis, they condemned as unlawful and pernicious. They thus laid themselves open to the charge of inconsistency or hypocrisy. It was a strange sight to behold liberty of association, liberty of instruction, and even the liberty of the press, ardently called for by the very men who made political absolutism their fundamental doctrine. Neither in Church nor State can power prove false to itself without depreciation.

Happily for the Catholic Church of France, the events in which it has participated, and the trials it has undergone have instilled into its ranks other dispositions than those of submission and the spirit of reaction. While amongst its millions, some rather blindly rallied round power, and others angrily joined the advocates for the past, independent and courageous thinkers appeared here and there, zealous believers, although strongly prepossessed in favour of the rights appertaining to the dignity and future welfare of the Church, and serving it, each in his own

way, according to his personal passion and bias. The journals, the periodical miscellanies, philosophic controversies, political debates, questions in the order of the day, liberty of association, and freedom of instruction, have supplied those volunteers of the Church with opportunities and fields of battle. They have conducted themselves there valiantly, and often with reputation. Many amongst them mixed with the world, and thence imported valuable allies to the church. Amongst the episcopacy they found generous and eloquent patrons. And thus has been formed in France, in the Catholic Church, and for its service, I will not say a party or coterie, but a group of elevated spirits, at once faithful and free, moderate and determined, rational and estimable, capable of sympathy with the sentiments of the country, as of devotion for their acknowledged faith, and determined to accept and to assume religious liberty as the basis of all relations between the Church and the State.

The fact has been tested by experience. Amongst this group, the Catholic Church, attacked in its general constitution and liberties by the events of Italy, has recently found, and will always find, its most useful as well as its steadiest defenders. These alone are in a condition to defend it effectually, and to obtain

credit with the country for their defence. Let not the Catholics deceive themselves on this point. The court of Rome has been too often and too long the ally of absolute power, for its cause not to excite suspicion amongst the friends of political and religious liberty. Thus, when itself in danger, how many hesitate to fly to its aid!—some from reminiscences and mistrust, some from respect for the civil power, and others through fear of unpopularity. And when the partisans, avowed or presumed, of the reaction in favour of absolutism are the first to take in hand the defence of the Church, they compromise much more than they serve it. In these days, the Catholic Church can only have for profitable champions, either at home or abroad, men who are sincere advocates for liberty, and equally determined to maintain that liberty for the general benefit, towards all and against all.

CHAP. XIII.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.

THERE are decisive moments in the lives of religious or civil associations; there are trials which, ill or well endured, determine for a long time their character and destiny.

I do not apply this to Christianity considered in its essence and as a religion; it soars above such alarms. Undoubtedly it is at present passing through a crisis; philosophic, scientific, and historical denial and doubt, assail it from all quarters, and in a multitude of minds faith falls or totters. As long as this crisis continues, Christianity will defend itself pre-eminently by its moral beauty and social utility. These qualities form a rampart it is already acquainted with, and under the shelter of which it has more than once retired in days of intellectual tempest. But the storm will subside, as has already happened more than once, and Christian light will resume,

above the clouds gathered round it by the hand of man, its reputation and empire. This future is written in the history of the past.

It is not for Christianity itself, but for the Christian Churches as they at present exist, that I feel uneasiness. Amongst the Christian communities for which I am anxious, I do not include the Greek Church, of which I have not sufficient knowledge to judge of its present state or future prospects. I speak only of the Catholic Church and the Protestant Churches. These are at the present moment exposed to trials which, according as they are well or ill endured, will exercise upon their own destiny, and the destiny of all Christian society, an influence the bearing of which exceeds calculation.

As regards the Catholic Church, the question is whether it will learn, without perverting itself religiously, to harmonize with the ideas, sentiments, and institutions which evidently prevail, and will continue to prevail, more and more in the civilized world. While continuing guardian of the principle of authority, will it acknowledge liberty as a right, and will it cease to consider itself as engaged in the cause of absolute power? While defending and maintaining its faith, will it admit the general ac-

tivity of minds, respect for science, and the propensity for social progress? Where it remains in alliance with the civil power, will it preserve the spirit and the pledges of independence which have so powerfully contributed to its moral strength? If it were to lose that strength, the Catholic clergy would incur the risk of falling into the condition of a body of functionaries charged with the administration of souls. There is, in these days, too much of a general tendency to reduce them to this false and subordinate position. Their mission is more exalted. To fulfil it effectually, they require a basis placed above and beyond the attacks of the temporal masters of the State. It has long found this resting-point in the Papacy. When the theocratic pretensions of the Papacy in France menaced the independence of the State and its government, the French clergy, faithful to their national society, exhibited an act of independence towards Rome; the Gallican Church appeared. The clergy are now reproached with having become ultramontanists. They have been driven to this extreme in defence of Christianity and of themselves. Attacked in their essential privileges, in their independence, in their faith, in their existence, the French Church

fell back on the centre of the general Catholic Church; it sought and found a refuge in Rome, and from thence raised itself up again. The scene has changed; Rome is now in urgent danger; what can be more natural than the eager zeal of the French clergy in her defence? In this most solemn moment for them, they are called on to perform in France an act at once of Christian wisdom and of national spirit by harmonizing with the new state of society; and, beyond France, an act of fidelity to the general Church and to its head by maintaining their independence and dignity. Will they emerge prosperously from this double trial? Will they be found equal to this double mission?

The difficulties and perils of the French Protestant Church, the only one I propose to speak of here, are of a distinct nature. It is not engaged or compromised in the political contests of the day; it is not the object of any attack on the part of temporal power; and it inspires no mistrust amongst the friends of liberty. But its organization is incomplete; its personal and traditional government fail. Securities also are wanting to it for the free development of the dissenting churches, which free inquiry incessantly engenders in its bosom, and which it

considers, and ought always to consider, as swarms detached from the maternal hive, but not entirely lost to it. And it is in the midst of an active religious movement that French Protestantism finds itself thus deprived of the internal authority and liberty of which it stands so much in need. Orthodox Christian faith reanimates itself amongst Protestants, and at the same time reanimates the controversy which provokes dissent. This simultaneous revival of Protestant faith and criticism coincides with the attacks of which Christianity itself is the object. And in this confused scuffle Protestantism is in danger of seeing its cause perverted, and of passing from the banner of Christian liberty under that of scepticism and indifference in the leading article of faith.

I return to the point from whence I started. Whether Catholic or Protestant, a common danger at present threatens the Christian Churches; the common foundations of their faith are attacked; they have all to defend the same interest and the same duty, for they would equally perish in the ruin of the edifice under which they all live. It is, moreover, the present condition of all, that to defend themselves and to defend Christianity they equally

require liberty. It is in the name of its general constitution and of the traditional guarantees for its independence that the Catholic Church can rise above the blows that strike it, and it can only demand its own liberties by admitting those of the other Christian Churches. Protestantism, in its turn, to preserve itself from anarchy while remaining faithful to its principle of free inquiry, is called upon to claim the complete organization of its interior government, and the unrestricted liberty of the dissenters who may secede from the Established Church. It is, moreover, required, in the present day, to defend the liberties of Catholicism at the same time with its own; it has an admirable opportunity of declaring an act of liberal fidelity as of Christian charity, and of thus giving to the Catholic Church one of those examples which confer on the givers the right of demanding a just return. Catholics and Protestants, who may ignore this position, and reject the line of conduct which it prescribes, will fail in their religious duty and permanent interest, for the blind and momentary indulgence of personal passion.

CHAP. XIV.

CHRISTIAN SOCIETIES.

I LEAVE the Church, and enter upon laical and political society. I have just said what I think of the actual position and relations of the Christian Churches. I wish to add also my opinion on the events, either accomplished or attempted under our own eyes in Italy, between civilized and Christian States.

It is above all in what concerns the mutual ties of different peoples, and the external relations of states, that modern civilization is especially Christian in its origin. With pagan antiquity, even in its most enlightened scenes of action and brightest days, foreigners were looked upon as enemies. Unless when particular and defined conventions were concluded between two nations, they considered themselves absolutely strangers to each other, and naturally

hostile. Force regulated their intercourse; the rights of nations had no existence. Scarcely did the most enlightened minds of ancient days, Aristotle and Cicero, conceive an indistinct idea on this point; we rarely meet in history with even vague and transient instincts of mutual privileges and duties.

Christianity has established two points equally new and important. It has placed the simple quality of man above and beyond all accidental and local circumstances, above and beyond nationality and social position. According to Christian faith, the stranger is a man, and possesses the rights, inherent to his human quality, in common with the fellow-countryman. At the same time that its origin is divine, the fundamental idea of Christianity is essentially and supremely human. Under the empire of this idea, Christianity looks upon all men, and all nations, as bound together by other ties than those of force; by bonds independent of the diversity of territories and governments. All men and all peoples were included in its mission: "Go ye and teach all nations." While labouring to convert all nations, Christianity also intended to unite them, and to instil into their reciprocal dealings the principles

of justice and peace, of mutual rights and duties. It is in the name of the christian faith and law that in Christendom the rights of nations originated.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, and during the middle ages, the Papacy, in the midst of the violent disorders of the times, and of its own difficulties, has ever been the interpreter, defender, and patron of the rights of nations. It has often tolerated, and even sanctioned, their violation; it has often subordinated them to its own ambition and interest; but, on the whole, it is the Papacy alone, at that epoch, which in the name of religion, morality, the natural privileges of the human race, and the general interests of Christianity, interfered between different states, between princes and people, the strong and the weak, to restore and support justice, respect for engagements, mutual duties and concessions: thus interposing between the pretensions and licentiousness of force, the principles of international law.

In the sixteenth century, the events and consequences of the Reformation gave to this law a great and rapid development. Under the impulse of that European struggle, the ideas, sentiments, and in-

terests of different nations were extended and united. After a century of religious wars, fed by political ambitions, it became necessary to enter into a compromise, a pacification, between the two powerful parties, Catholic and Protestant, who were arrayed against each other in combat. The Treaty of Westphalia established the foundations of religious peace, and the balance of power in Europe. Grotius reduced to legal maxims the work of Henry IV. and Richelieu, even before it was definitively concluded. The law of nations became a great system and a great fact generally accepted.

Since that epoch, a new power, general civilization, the universal progress of minds and manners, above all, the spirit of politics, have given to this law much more distinctness and empire. When I reflect on the extent to which it has been, in our days, misinterpreted, and the licence with which it has been violated, I almost hesitate to use this language. It is a lamentable peculiarity of our time, that the spectacles which most forcibly strike the eye, are those which are more than ever opposed to the aspirations of the thought. Nevertheless we cannot deny that progress, although far below the desire

of sound judgments and honest hearts, is real and extensive. We have seen the most offensive violations of national rights attempted and accomplished, the most serious attacks made upon justice and good sense in the relations of states; but these outrages have not been permanent, and we have also seen them destroyed almost as soon as they were perpetrated. Those which have lasted, such, for instance, as the partition of Poland, have been stricken by a European anathema, which renders them burdensome to their possessors, and raises itself as a powerful obstacle against the renewal of similar acts, or at least against the probability of their durable success. The follies and iniquities of force were, in former times, more easily tolerated; they have abounded, and may perhaps still abound, in our own age; but they scarcely ever fail to be recognized, denounced, and compelled to pause, or even to fall before the reaction of the justice and truth which are the objects of their attack. The friends of national right have cause for regret, but none for discouragement. Even in the days of trial of the Christian faith, it is the honour and privilege of Christian civilization, that the evil cannot extinguish

the good ; that the struggle between good and evil principles continues through all chances, and that the future approaches nearer and nearer, which will assuredly falsify and destroy the mischievous works of the present.

CHAP. XV.

THE LAW OF NATIONS.

I TAKE the Law of Nations in its most extended and exalted sense. This law was for a long time almost entirely restricted to questions springing from the relations of governments between themselves, without reference to the condition of the peoples whose destinies they control. Diplomacy seldom troubled itself to inquire, scarcely wanted to know, what were the internal system, institutions, degrees, or forms of political civilization of the States between whom it negotiated peace or war, alliances or rivalries. Since the spirit of reform or revolution has agitated nearly all the nations of Europe, and that the majority of governments are engaged in contest with this formidable alternative, the sphere of national right has greatly extended, and external policy is called upon to take into consideration and solve

facts and problems much more complicated than those with which it was formerly occupied. To questions of extent or territorial configuration, of European equilibrium, of political ties or commercial relations, are now added those which emanate from the connection between government and people, from the reciprocal claims of power and liberty in the different states, from the intestine struggles of parties, the variety of their principles, their strength, and their chances of success. External policy is compelled to look carefully on all these facts, and to regulate in a great measure its attitude and resolutions according to their bearing. An appreciation of the internal system of States, of their troubles and vicissitudes; a comparison between the rights of princes and people, and a solution of the questions of principle or prudence which present themselves on this subject, enter, in these days, into the domain of national law.

Italy has been, for ages, the theatre of diplomatic and warlike rivalry between the great European powers. Germany, Spain, and France, have ardently contended there for territory and supremacy. But in this contest they listened only to ambition and force; they cared little whether the various sections

of Italy were governed in any specific manner ; they neither felt themselves bound to form an opinion nor to adopt a course with regard to the internal system of the kingdom of Naples, or of the Roman States ; nor to support either by negotiation or even by arms. To-day, the old questions of rivalry and of the balance of European power are still in agitation ; but questions of the internal government and system of Italy herself are added to them, and have even taken the first place : a great advance of justice and elevation in the external policy of Europe, but a heavy additional burden for those who have to put their hands to the work.

It belongs to the Law of Nations alone to distribute this burden equitably. This law has not disappeared with increasing complication ; the extension of its domain has not altered its authority ; because the rights of the people have entered into the Law of Nations, the rights of governments have not been banished therefrom ; when liberty wins her spurs, power does not surrender up its sword, and we have not rejected the violences and falsehoods of absolute power to adopt the similar extravagances of universal suffrage. Whether new or old, the questions which in their several relations disturb Christian society, can only

be efficaciously solved by respect for, and according to the principles of, the Law of Nations. Beyond this, nothing remains but a state of revolution, which is neither more nor less than barbarism forcibly intruded into the midst of civilization.

CHAP. XVI.

THE INDEPENDENCE OF ITALY.

THE severest result of war, conquest, can only legalize and irrevocably establish itself by assimilation of peoples. History relates, in every page, the tale of victorious ambition and hopeless resistance, of provinces and nations incessantly changing their masters. It explains the causes of the successes and overthrows, of the dismemberment and aggrandizement of States. So long as the vanquished are not sufficiently confounded with the victors to forget their defeat, and submit with patience to their new condition, the conquest remains an act of violence which treaties may recognize, which superior force and long continuance may maintain, but which will never cease to be contested, oppressive, and precarious.

Such was the character of the conquests of Austria in Italy. Despite their rule so often re-established, despite the personal moderation and ability of some

of their princes, the Austrians never succeeded in making their Italian subjects fellow-countrymen; they were always in their Italian possessions, conquerors and foreigners.

To expel the stranger, to liberate herself from foreign dominion, was with the Italians merely a question of opportunity and force; independence became, with them, a national and natural passion. When, at my request, King Louis Philippe sent M. Rossi to Rome, I was well acquainted with the past life and sentiments of the new ambassador. "You know as well as I do," I said to him, "that Italy cannot contend alone and by herself with Austria; fresh revolutions and great European wars can alone furnish her with the opportunity and means. We are convinced that the interests of France, the interest of her liberties as well as of her government, of her permanent greatness as of her existing happiness, command her and us to avoid revolutions and new wars. All that can be done, without compromising European order and peace, for the good of Italy, for the redress of her wrongs, for the independence and internal reform of the different governments, we are ready to do to the utmost of our power. But the interest of France is our first duty and the rule of

our policy: you have become a Frenchman; I feel convinced that you have made up your mind to serve France and her policy above all other considerations, in Italy as elsewhere." He had thus resolved, in fact, both as a man of honour and of superior mind: he comprehended to a particle the position of his old and new countries. While his mission lasted, he transacted the affairs of both in mutual accordance; and when new revolutions came on, when M. Rossi, having discharged his duty to France, resumed the hope of independence for Italy, while devoting himself to the cause of the national impulse, he embarked in the struggle against the spirit of revolution. In that struggle he lost his life, and found his glory.

In such circumstances and in presence of such chances, when the yearnings of the Italians towards independence burst forth, the conscience of Europe became excited. But under the tempest of the spirit of revolution and ambition, the Italians have unnecessarily and heavily compromised their position and enterprise.

It was already a great peril and a serious misfortune for them to have been compelled to seek foreign aid, and foreign aid of the most powerful character,

to conquer their independence. They had the good fortune to find, in the sovereign of France, a prince engaged from his youth in their cause, eager to acquit himself towards them, and who has contented himself with an extremely moderate reward in return for an immense service. It had already been frequently declared beyond the Alps, "*L'Italia farà da se.*" France has done for Italy, what Italy was evidently unable to do for herself. If Italy had been told beforehand, that to secure her independence, to be delivered from foreigners, would only cost her Savoy and Nice, and that the new strangers who had conquered for her would return peaceably to their own land, would leave her in possession of herself, could such a result have appeared probable, and would not the Italians have congratulated themselves upon it, as upon an unexpected happiness?

But they are not contented. It has not sufficed for them to be delivered from foreign rule; they have, at the same time, raised other questions and attempted other enterprises. They have undertaken, throughout all Italy, to overthrow established governments, and to achieve complete conquest for the benefit of a new and single master. They have gone far beyond claiming the right of a nation against a

foreign yoke ; they have placed in the very heart of Italy, the rights of peoples in struggle with the rights of princes, the longings after innovation in contest with sentiments of fidelity, and general patriotism in arms against local patriotism. To the difficulties and perils of foreign war, they have added the difficulties and perils of civil war ; the conquest of independence has served as an instrument to the conquests of ambition ; revolution has taken the place of national rights.

For this violent and hazardous conduct, the Italians, I am aware, offer an explanation which they look upon as peremptory. The overthrow of the old governments was, they say, indispensable to the conquest of their independence. Austria had at Florence, Modena, Parma, and Naples, even in Rome itself, allies infeoffed in their empire ; it was necessary to destroy these instruments of foreign rule to destroy the foreign rule itself. “ We have,” they add, “ attempted a work of internal revolution, because the success of the work of national independence could only be secured at that price.”

Here I recognize the fundamental error, the fatal passion, which pervert and compromise, and have frequently ruined, the noblest and most lawful en-

terprises. Regular policy, which considers different facts and rights, and respects all liberties, has its own difficulties and doubtful hazards. It requires long and reiterated efforts of prudence, equity, and perseverance to obtain successes often incomplete and always contested. Exclusive, fiery spirits do not resign themselves to this task ; to escape it they rush into opposite extremes, they have recourse to violence that they may dispense with management and patience. They find themselves in face of old adversaries or uncertain allies ; they shrink from the penalties of daily combat to retain or vanquish them ; they prefer declaring against them war to the death, to leading with them a toilsome life ; they kill them to avoid opposing force to their force, liberty to their liberty. Thus difficulties and dangers are created much more formidable than those which are sought to be avoided ; positions are complicated which might remain natural ; the future is compromised to evade the embarrassments of the present ; revolutionary war supersedes political contest ; hatreds and fears are suffered to predominate ; blind passions, to which men often sacrifice justice, liberty, and even success.

It is true, Austria had, amongst the greater part of the Italian princes, declared or secret allies, who

acknowledged her preponderance and promoted her policy. But why? Because they believed their safety, their very existence, to be menaced by revolutions; because they regarded Austria as the strongest power in Italy, and always reckoned upon her victory. More than once several amongst them, particularly the Kings of Naples and the Grand Dukes of Tuscany, have found the Austrian supremacy extremely oppressive, and have tried to throw it off. The House of Bourbon was not in natural intimacy with the House of Austria, yet it has recently proved at Parma and Gaeta that no reverse could make it lose the sentiment of its dignity and greatness. The Austrian princes established at Florence had contracted for their Italian country a sincere and liberal attachment; but when, both within and without, a great danger assailed them, it was towards Austria that they turned their eyes, it was from Austria that they expected and received effectual aid. Supposing this general position to have been changed, that Austria had lost her possessions and empire in Italy, that supremacy there had passed to an Italian power, strong enough in itself, and sufficiently supported in Europe to defend Italian independence against Austrian ambition; —

will it be believed that the Italian princes could not, under those conditions, have accommodated themselves to this new state of Italy? or that they would have carried the love of absolute power, associated with painful dependence, to the extent of conspiring together and endangering themselves for vanquished Austria? Princes are not so faithful or unchangeable. At Naples, Florence, and Rome, they would have accepted and supported the independence of Italy, had they believed her sufficiently strong for self-defence, or could they have found in that course their personal safety. They would have had, under their own eyes, and at their own gates, a great example of such a change in attitude and policy. What Italian power was more Austrian than Piedmont? Where did the court of Vienna for a long period find more deference and zeal than at Turin? Other times have arrived and have opened other perspectives to the Sardinian court: it has not hesitated to change thoroughly its alliances and paths. Without the same temptations, the courts of Rome, Naples, and Florence, would not have been more obstinate; they would have taken, in emancipated Italy, their rank, their influence, their new course of policy, and they would have found in independence a little more

labour, but also more dignity and strength, than in subordination.

Undoubtedly, if the liberation of Italy had only been attempted and achieved on such conditions, without internal overthrow, and without the spoliation of the Italian princes, the enterprise would still have had its difficulties and dangers. But they would not have been found insurmountable; and I have no hesitation in saying that, under all circumstances, the law of nations respected, and peace maintained in Italy, would have given to Italian independence better chances than she will find in the attempt to establish the exclusive rule of Piedmont, founded on so many ruins.

CHAP. XVII.

LIBERTY IN ITALY.

THE Piedmontese conquest does not secure liberty to Italy better than it secures independence.

The best reminiscence that will endure of Count Cavour is, that he was a sincere advocate for liberty; that he really respected it, even on the part of his opponents, more than is usually practised in revolutionary times. He did not fear being contradicted, and steadily believed that liberty brought him more power than danger.

It must also be acknowledged that a specific and precious liberty,—freedom in religious faith,—has made, and is at present making, in Italy, remarkable progress. It was very recently unknown, and roughly rejected when first attempting to appear. Italians were not permitted to be Protestants, and even foreign Protestants were only allowed to exercise their worship in certain districts, and under

many restrictions. Consciences are now emancipated beyond the Alps ; no one is any longer compelled to advertise a faith he does not follow, and Christians of different communions can assemble and pray according to their creed.

In this, however, the incoherence of facts is manifest and offensive. Liberty of conscience in Italy is, at the same time, in progress and in check ; while Protestants acquire it, with the Catholics it is compromised. As I have just stated, the free constitution of the different Churches forms an essential portion of religious liberty ; the new government of Italy violently attacks the liberties of the Catholic Church, not only in its relations with the State, but in its individual and internal organisation. The new Churches become free in Italy, while the liberty of the old Italian Church is in restraint and peril.

There are words which awaken such expanded ideas and such sanguine hopes that they possess great power in themselves, almost independently of the corresponding facts. The word *liberty* possesses this prestige ; by its simple utterance men are charmed and swayed ; they feel convinced that they possess liberty as soon as they begin to speak of it, and

they readily believe that it is given to them because they have promised it to themselves. There is no illusion more deceptive to those who give way to it, and more vexatious to those who are not under its influence. To bear fruit, liberty must be real, and it is only real under conditions to which words and promises cannot suffice.

The first of these conditions is, that liberty should exist for all ; that all parties and citizens should equally enjoy it, in fact as in right, especially for the defence of established interests ; for of all rights, defence is the most to be respected. As long as liberty is a weapon on the one side more than a defence on the other ; while it is not surrounded by general guarantees which assure its exercise to the weak as well as to the strong, let it not be said that it is conquered and established ; let not advantage be taken of its name to impose upon the country which expects, or to laud the power which boasts of it. Power has no right to call itself liberal except when it honestly accepts liberty, instead of using it as a means of trickery and falsehood. Nations can only be free when they are not dupes ; and there is no trickery more contemptible, nor imposition more ridiculous, than a perpetual invocation of the name

of liberty when it is neither equally dispensed nor effectually secured.

Another condition, equally imperious, is required before a country can believe or call itself free, viz., that liberty shall be allied to that security of persons, of interests, and of common life, which is the essential and leading want of society. When what is called liberty disturbs and impedes, instead of protecting, the daily relations and affairs of men ; when it is incessantly mixed up with threats and violence ; when, instead of maintaining peace in the State, it provokes discord,—this ceases to be liberty, and becomes anarchy ; a position still more deplorable, because it entails with its inherent evils violent reactions in which liberty,—even temperate and legitimate liberty,—most miserably perishes.

I repeat here merely common-place facts, of which our own country, and the present generation in its brief passage, have, in more than one instance, encountered harsh experience. But who could deny that these well-known events are not too truly repeated at present in Italy, particularly in the kingdom of Naples ? I have no taste for the collection of repulsive facts, or for their concentration in gloomy pictures ; but beyond all doubt it is not

liberty which now reigns in Southern Italy; and, in point of arbitrary proceedings and violence, its masters of to-day would gain nothing in comparison with its kings of yesterday.

“We know this well,” exclaim honest and enlightened minds; “but there are no means of escaping from such a crisis; this is the natural course of things; to reach liberty we must pass through revolution.”

I could comprehend, and without fully accepting it, I could admit this excuse to a certain extent, if, in the south of Italy, the revolution had been a natural, spontaneous, national and controlling movement, such as may have happened elsewhere. Wrongs were not wanting to the Neapolitans, and they were justified in demanding and compelling from their government important reforms; but facts have proved that they were not themselves inclined to take the initiative in a revolution, and to push it to the extreme point of expelling their kings. Foreigners, armed foreigners, the bands of Garibaldi, were required to commence this work; and even when successfully begun, the enterprise encountered obstinate resistance, not only from the young king and the Neapolitan army, but from a considerable part of the

population. The battalions of Piedmont were called in to aid the Garibaldians, and to enable King Victor Emmanuel to besiege King Francis II. in Gaeta, that the revolution might appear to triumph, and establish civil war in Naples in anticipation of liberty.

I would ask the following question of all persons uninfluenced by prejudice and declared partizanship: If the Austrian rule alone had been abolished in Italy, if the movement of independence and liberal reform, which such an event could not fail to excite in all the Italian states, had developed itself without involving territorial overthrows and conquests, can it be doubted that at this day there would have been in the kingdom of Naples more liberty, justice, and prosperity, and better securities for the future, than has been conferred upon it by the parliament of Turin?

I have much respect and love for the constitutional system; but I do not consider it an all-powerful panacea. It is not enough to establish in a country elections, chambers, and parliamentary government to deliver it from all its ills, to give it the full advantages held forth, and to secure it from the fatal consequences of the errors that may be committed. The conditions for the salutary govern-

ment of nations are more complicated; all interests are not satisfied, and all rights are not secured by substituting a constitution in place of an old autocracy, and it is quite possible to institute a parliament in Turin without establishing liberty in Italy.

CHAP. XVIII.

ITALIAN UNITY.

BUT there is yet another panacea; the unity of Italy, which is to cure all the evils of the country, to elevate its strength to the level of its name, and to realize abroad and at home its most brilliant hopes.

If we were still in the middle ages, in presence of the foreigner, alternately German or French, incessantly invading and devastating Italy, given up to never-ending intestine discords, and perpetually at war with herself, from prince to prince, from faction to faction, from city to city, from street to street, I could understand the passion for Italian unity, prosecuted at any cost, and even with little probability of success. It was in the name of that single idea, and under the hand of a single master, that Italy could then entertain some hope of struggling against the foreigners, and of putting an end to the domestic quarrels so mutually destructive. I am not

surprised that the great patriots of that time should have so ardently preached Italian unity; if the external enfranchisement and the internal pacification of their country had been practicable, it was only to be obtained on that condition.

But we are no longer in the middle ages; for a long time the different Italian states have ceased to wage mutual war; the Italians no longer quarrel amongst themselves; they have no longer occasion to seek a single power to impose peace on all. And as regards foreigners, a new era is opened to them; in fact, and at present, the sword of France has delivered them from Austrian supremacy; in principle, and for the future, the idea that Italy ought to be independent, and that no foreign power should be permitted to rule there, is rapidly becoming a European idea—a maxim of public European law. France has proclaimed it; England supports it with all her influence; already the greater part of the governments of Europe rally round it. As a security against the foreigner, Italian unity is an anachronism; neither for her internal peace nor for her independence does Italy require, in the present day, a single Italian power. Her guarantees lie in other conditions.

Useless to independence, Italian unity is even more useless to liberty. When, after a long labour, unity of government is finally and permanently established in a great state, liberty may attempt to take its turn. The work is difficult, as we well know, and subject to many thwarting obstacles; nevertheless, I do not believe it to be impossible, neither ought it to be so considered, for in the bosom of a great country, and in presence of a great central authority, there is no choice except between political liberty and the slow, and perhaps brilliant, but infallibly inherent decline of absolute power. The condition of a country is very different in which, far from being already established, unity of government has no existence, and is struggling to maintain itself: for a long time it can only be sought after, or obtained at the expense of liberty.

The history of all the European states, of our own above the rest, is at hand to substantiate this fact. We praise, and on just grounds, the national and political unity of France; but what is the price at which it has been won? At the cost of a long series of internal commotions, and of a struggle protracted through several ages against the liberties, aristocratic and popular, of the different portions of the terri-

tory, provinces, towns, and rural districts successively assembled and associated together. In this contest nearly all those liberties perished, as sacrifices to the achievement of unity; and, to-day we are painfully endeavouring to reconquer our liberties, general and local, without suffering unity to perish in its turn. In embarking in pursuit of unity, Italy, I admit, will enter on this rough career with the advantages of a more advanced civilization and superior political intelligence; but she will not, on that account, escape the violences, iniquities, sufferings, and dangers of the enterprise; and she will find them still more serious, as, by her natural constitution and past history, she is less prepared for and adapted to unity. I have no desire to repeat here what is everywhere proclaimed, and what the sound, practical sense of the Emperor Napoleon I. admitted at the very moment in which his conquering and despotic imagination indulged itself in the perspective of the unity which Italy now covets. It is evident that the geography and history of Italy are opposed to unity; her territorial configuration renders a sole centre very difficult to determine and maintain; a single central power will ever be in combat with the national prides, local traditions, popular sentiments, and ob-

stinate prejudices of people as well as of princes. It is already a work of extreme labour to dethrone effectively a dynasty; but nations and capitals are made to abdicate with much more difficulty than kings.

Strange spectacle ! In the name of nationality the enterprise in which we participate is attempted, and yet it begins by rooting out old and illustrious nations. It is possible that under a violent impulse of passion to deliver themselves from a foreign yoke or a hateful system, and under the cloak of what is called universal suffrage, these nations might sacrifice themselves and their past ; but the sacrifices of passion are precarious ; reminiscences, habits, antipathies, regrets, will soon resume their empire, and excite difficulties in the work of unity, increasing from day to day. How will it be if the state which seeks to invade all should not be remarkably strong or illustrious in itself, if it should scarcely equal some of those it pretends to absorb ? When the French monarchy conquered, by force or negotiation, the dependencies which made it so great, it long remained immeasurably superior to them in resources and reputation ; it was a powerful state, seizing upon and incorporating inferior provinces and populations.

The position of Piedmont in Italy is extremely different; it is a small sovereignty which, by favour of an external crisis and a mighty foreign aid, attempts the sudden absorption of other states, some of which are at least its equal. A bad point of departure for acting in Italy the part of Louis XIV. in Europe. And in comparison with the pretensions of M. de Cavour, those of Louis XIV. are extremely moderate, for if he wrested from the princes his neighbours many provinces, he never dreamed of deposing them, or of appropriating all their dominions to himself.

In the name of Italian unity, Piedmont undertakes quite a different affair from the conquest of kingdoms and the deposition of kings: it undertakes to change the entire system of the Catholic Church, and its position in the whole world, by dethroning the Papacy.

CHAP. XIX.

THE PAPACY.

I HAVE questioned the policy of Piedmont towards the Papacy in the name of religious liberty; I have now to consider it in the name of the law of nations.

I admit, let the suggestion come either from Count de Cavour or M. Mazzini, that the new Italian State it is intended to found, whether kingdom or republic, requires possession of Rome, — that Rome should be its capital. Rome is the moral metropolis of Italy, the only city in favour of which the other historic capitals of the different states can abdicate their title and surrender their pride. Unless the sovereign of the new Italian kingdom resides at Rome, he will not be looked upon as King of Italy: Italy will be a single state, without its natural and only capital. To render Italian unity real in the eyes and opinion of the world, Rome must be its seat. To become

really the head of Italian unity, Piedmont is condemned to dethrone the Papacy in Rome.

In plain fact, to attain its object, Piedmont must trample under foot the law of nations by despoiling the Pope of the states of which he is sovereign, as it crushes the rights of religious liberty by overthrowing the constitution of the Catholic Church of which the Pope is the head.

I might pause here ; such necessities condemn the policy they impose. But a system springs up in aid of this policy, and assumes not only to excuse but to justify it in principle : a system supported by liberals and sincere Christians. I do not propose to discuss it here at full, neither do I wish to evade it altogether.

Starting from this general and legitimate principle, that religious and civil society, spiritual and temporal power, are essentially distinct and ought to be separated, two absolute consequences may be drawn ; the one, that between the two societies and powers there should be no alliance whatever ; the other, that in Rome, where the two powers are united, this union ought to be abolished, and temporal authority entirely removed from the Papacy, thus reduced to its exclusively spiritual supremacy. I have already said what I think in the first case ; I look upon the second

as one of those examples in which logic stifles justice and reason.

The union of spiritual and temporal power in the Papacy has not been a fact systematically pursued and accomplished in the name of a rational principle or an ambitious aspiration : reason and ambition have both had their share in it ; but it is necessity, close and continued necessity, which has produced and supported this fact through many opposing obstacles. In fulfilling and to enable it to fulfil, in exercising and to enable it to exercise its spiritual power, the Papacy requires absolute independence and a certain degree of material authority ; it has acquired both, originally in Rome, then in the neighbourhood of Rome, and finally in other parts of Italy, successively and under different titles : at first, as a municipal magistracy ; secondly, in virtue of territorial proprietorship ; and thirdly, under the title of full and direct sovereignty. Possessions and government accrued to the Papacy as a natural appendage and necessary support of its high religious position, and in proportion as that position developed itself. The donations of Pepin and Charlemagne are amongst the principal incidents of that development at once spiritual and temporal, begun early and seconded by

the instincts of nations and the favour of kings. By becoming head of the Church, and that he might continue so substantially, the Pope became also sovereign of a state.

Thus brought on by the obvious course of things and the force of situations, the union of the two powers in the Papacy has also led to a natural although unforeseen result; it has established their complete distinction everywhere else. "It is necessary," said M. Odilon-Barrot, with sound reason, in the Legislative Assembly*, "that the two powers should be confounded in the Roman States to ensure their separation in the rest of the world." Many centuries before M. Odilon-Barrot, the instinct of Christian communities and the general interest of European civilisation had declared the *same necessity*. As a temporal sovereign, the Pope was formidable to no one; but he derived from his sovereignty an effective security for his own independence and moral authority; the equal of kings in rank without being their rival in temporal power, he could everywhere defend the dignity and rights of spiritual order, the true source and basis of his power. That the popes have often abused this position, as well to

* At the sitting of the 20th October, 1849.

embarrass as to serve the sovereigns with whom they were in contest or alliance, no enlightened mind can dispute, and the friends of right in general, of all rights, ought to be the first to acknowledge it; but it is not less true that it is under the shelter of its little temporal sovereignty that the Papacy has proclaimed and supported in Europe the essential difference between the Church and the State, the distinction of the two powers, of their reciprocal domains and privileges. This fact, the safeguard and honour of modern civilization, has derived birth and strength from the double character of the Papacy, and amply compensates for the abuses practised by the popes in their double empire.

What is acting in our own days? To this great historical fact, which has maintained itself through so many ages and vicissitudes, a system is opposed. Not only the distinction and general separation of Church and State, of spiritual and temporal power, but their utter incompatibility, under any emergency or in any form or measure, is assumed as a principle; and under the influence of logic, to follow out to the end the consequences of this principle, enlightened minds forget history, honest men hold as of no

account the law of nations, and liberals mutilate liberty.

I slight neither systems nor logic ; they are salutary and brilliant exercises in which human intellect displays its fecundity and vigour in pursuit of truth. But when a system reaches such consequences and exacts such sacrifices, I mistrust the system itself, and I reject its pretensions to absolute truth as to universal dominion. These rigorous and bold arguers pause too readily ; they should advance farther in the road in which they are entangled ; they should acknowledge that in the Papacy the spiritual and temporal powers are intimately united and essential to each other, and that they ought to stand or fall together ; they ought to avow openly that, in attacking and overthrowing the temporal power of the Pope, his spiritual authority, that is to say the Catholic Church itself, is attacked and overthrown. They should proclaim the necessity and right of accomplishing this great revolutionary destruction, as the absolute republicans proclaim the right and necessity of abolishing every form of royalty, every power not elected by the people, and of ancient date, no matter to what extent liberty and national rights may suffer in the process. And to encourage them-

selves under these sacrifices, they should assert and believe that the future will make up for the sufferings and injustices they inflict at present.

I am no idolater of the past ; society changes, institutions become effete ; fresh wants call for fresh gratifications ; new ideas engender new facts ; it is the peculiar characteristic and honour of human nature that it alone on earth is in a state of mobility, capable of progress as of fall ; that progressive generations are not circumscribed within the same narrow condition as in an eternal prison, and that, whether assisted or opposed, they march, each at its own pace, towards the future open to their ambition. But while taking part in this continued although unequal impulse of humanity, the undertakers of reform (I speak only of those who are honest and sincere) fall into two capital errors : they forget that the great facts which have endured so long have assuredly had some strong grounds for their existence, and they do not foresee that in the social edifice great voids are not easily filled up. The Christian world has now a paramount question to resolve, which stands thus : Which of these two enterprises is the least impracticable ;— to introduce and establish in the Catholic Church civil liberty, or to maintain Christian order in Catholic

countries by overthrowing the foundations of the Catholic Church, and to effect this overthrow by invading the liberty and rights of nations?

Let no honest minds beguile themselves on this point; a choice must be made between these two attempts.

To reduce those to whom they are submitted to the necessity of accepting the second, it is affirmed that in its own States the temporal power of the Papacy is not susceptible of reform, and that for its maintenance it is compelled to condemn the populations who live under its law to a detestable and incurable government. It is at this price, they say, that Europe would purchase the continuance of existing order. Does Europe desire, or has she a right to demand this?

I might, as has already been done, and not without just reason, dispute the extent of the vices of the Papal government; I might argue that its acts are less mischievous than its maxims, abuses more common than excesses, power more inert and impeding than tyrannical; I might say that amongst the reforms demanded, several have been already accomplished, and that, if others have failed, the fault rests as much with the subjects as with the sovereign. I

have no wish to enter into this comparative examination of good and evil with their extenuating circumstances; a question of equity rather than of policy. I admit that the Roman government demands extensive reform; but I affirm that the disease is not incurable, that the means of recovery are not wanting, and that Europe is not called upon for its own essential repose to condemn the Roman populations to endure without hope the vices of their legislature.

I introduce Europe here because Europe has to take her part, and a great part, in the reproaches hurled against the Roman government; she has recognized and proclaimed the necessity of reforms; even more, she has demanded them herself, thus seconding complaints and opening the career to hopes. Further, she has neither insisted on nor lent her hand to their execution. Some states have allowed Roman affairs to fall again into the old track; others have urged Rome to the policy of inertia and reaction.

This is either to ignore entirely the essential defects of the Roman government, or to become their voluntary accomplice. By tradition and situation, by nature and habit, that government is motionless and weak; its maxims and manners repudiate change;

and when it is compelled to admit that change is necessary, it often wants strength to surmount obstacles ; in this difficult career it requires encouragement and support. Europe herself, Catholic or political Europe, has alone sufficient influence with the Papal government to impart to it under such circumstances the resolution and prop it requires.

As to the extent of the reforms to be introduced into the Roman government, I do not pause here to examine in detail those that are at once necessary and practicable. To form a sound opinion on these points, things should be examined more closely, and means compared with ends with more precision than I am at this moment able to exercise. I only preserve reminiscences and general views. The more I reflect on the subject, the more I satisfy myself that the effective reform of the Roman government failed, not because means were wanting, but from a deficiency in the boldness of spirit and steadiness of will necessary to accept and apply them.

In these days, there are words and appearances which congeal governments with terror, and conjure up abysses before them where they ought to find havens of refuge. Such is the effect produced upon many moderate and conservative politicians by re-

publican names, forms, and institutions; according to their perception, these terms imply the utter ruin of order and power. What would have happened, nevertheless, I ask of all independent and clear-sighted judges of State affairs, if a great pope — a Gregory VII. or a Sixtus V. — understanding his age and a new condition of society, and without deceiving himself as to the dangers of the Papacy in his own family, had given or rather restored to the cities of the Roman States that strong municipal independence which approaches so closely to political autonomy, and had called upon them almost to govern themselves, while still maintaining over them the title and some of the essential rights of sovereignty? I do not believe that the Pope could become the king of a central constitutional monarchy; the nature and complexity of his power render this mode of government impracticable for him; but central constitutional monarchy is not the only form of good government; and I do believe that the Pope may readily become the chief of an aggregation of cities and provinces, governed each in its own locality by free institutions and acknowledging his sovereignty, without being submitted to his absolute power. Nothing is more conformable to the history, manners, and

traditions of Italy, neither is it incompatible with the nature and requirements of the temporal and spiritual authority of the Papacy. Many, I doubt not, will consider this notion as a chimera; it may be so, if we look only at the every-day practice of most governments and the lazy timidity of their chiefs; but I feel convinced that, if this chimera had been attempted, Piedmont could not have found in the invasion and absorption of the Roman States the facilities we have witnessed. And if, as I think, the attempt at Italian unity under Piedmontese dominion should fail, if several of the states now amalgamated should reclaim their independence, if the Papacy, in particular, should preserve the provinces, which still remain to it, and regain possession of any of those it has lost, it will be by calling on them to govern themselves through an energetic local organization, that it will re-establish and exercise its dominion over them without the dread of incessantly recurring insurrection.

CHAP. XX.

UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE IN ITALY.

I do not propose to discuss, in this place, universal suffrage in principle, and under a general point of view. I confine myself exclusively to the part it has played in Italy.

A few days after the admission of Father Lacordaire into the French Academy, and with reference to the speech I had made in reply to him, a man of talent wrote thus from Turin: "M. Guizot appears to me to have fallen into an error as to the character of the Italian Revolution. That event was in no sense an overflowing of democracy, such as it is understood in France. It should rather be considered aristocratic, as proceeding from the enlightened classes. The predominating idea is that of independence. Universal suffrage has been employed rather as an engine of diplomacy, and no one demands its introduction into the regular mechanism of government."

There is truth in this language. It was not, in fact, democratic passion, but the desire for national independence and political liberty, which occupied the foremost place in the Italian movement. That movement was the work of the higher and more elevated orders, far more than of the popular masses. They wished to expel the foreigner, and to constitute an Italian native country; not to overthrow and remodel Italian society.

But events are more complicated than they appear. This Italian movement, national rather than political, and political rather than social, nevertheless burst forth and accomplished itself under the influence and by the aid of the republican and democratic party, who had for their object in Italy an end and a revolution far more profound than the expulsion of foreigners and the reform of established governments. This Italian movement was, in reality, M. de Cavour and M. Mazzini combined together, extremely opposed to and mistrustful of each other, but mutually necessary; the one, a liberal patriot and an advocate for constitutional monarchy; the other, a revolutionary patriot proclaiming the republic single and democratic as his avowed design. Each accepted the other as an instrument; each

made concessions, and imparted his influence at every step to advance his individual purpose, and each at every advance was on the point of separating.

In this alliance, or competition,—for either name is applicable—and at the point which events have now reached,—M. de Cavour carried the day. Had he from the commencement, and like M. Mazzini, determined in favour of Italian unity? Did he invariably desire and endeavour to establish the Italian kingdom, single and constitutional, as M. Mazzini desired and sought to establish the Italian republic sole and democratic? I cannot say; but it is of little import. If M. de Cavour did not premeditate all that he accomplished, if he was gradually led on to more conquests than he sought, he undoubtedly accepted that situation: and if he only reached the end when driven to it by his rival, he vanquished his rival by depriving him of his arms.

But this victory was dearly purchased by M. de Cavour; at a higher price, in my opinion, than it is worth. While only seeking for his country a constitutional monarchy and a high position in Europe, he appropriated by force from the hands of M. Mazzini

the repeated violations of the law of nations, war against the established Church, and an appeal alternately to insurrection and universal suffrage, to make or unmake governments;—in so many words, M. de Cavour adopted for allies principles and powers essentially revolutionary.

Did M. de Cavour and his friends ever reflect on this? Do people thoroughly know what universal suffrage is, alternately substituted for the order established between different states, and for that subsisting in the bosom of each separate state; and popular will officially called in, sometimes to abolish international treaties, at others to set aside public authority? This is simply democratic tyranny in its blindest pretensions, permanent revolution in place of law.

What would history tell us to-day, if, in the sixteenth century, Charles V., on entering Switzerland with his troops immediately after the dissensions between the Catholics and Protestants, had indiscriminately invited the discontented populations to vote for the abolition of the local governments which displeased them, and the annexation of their territories to his empire? Conquest openly pursued and proclaimed is less offensive and less anti-social than in-

ternal anarchy employed to sanction the enterprises of foreign power and ambition.

I say internal anarchy, for universal suffrage invoked and collected in the midst of war, by one of the combatants, under the license of passions and the conflict of arms, what is it but anarchy in the service of force? Undoubtedly there may be, there have been, national and legitimate insurrections which have delivered peoples, and have continued national and lawful even when obliged to have recourse to the aid of the stranger. When France sent her soldiers to the succour of the Greeks, did that make the struggle for independence in Greece commence by foreign intervention? And when the great European powers recognised the Greek kingdom, did they appeal to popular suffrage as the basis of and apology for their determination? They took care not to introduce into the general policy and relations of states so much disorder and incoherence; they acted at once with more wisdom and firmness; at first they allowed the Greek to undertake and prosecute their enfranchisement by themselves; subsequently, when they saw them evince proofs of energy and constancy, they came to their assistance; finally, when they acknowledged their right to independence and national

existence, they openly proclaimed that great fact, while maintaining the principles and regular proceedings of the law of nations. They admitted the new state into the European system without accepting insurrection as the permanent right of peoples, or universal suffrage as the supreme condition of international law.

Is this what has taken place in Italy, and especially in the kingdom of Naples? Can we speak of universal suffrage in relation to a country in which foreign intervention has originated the movement, and civil war perpetuates itself after the annexation?

So much confusion and falsehood are incompatible with the policy of a great nation and a regular government: it should reject them at once. Instead of accepting blindly and precipitately the Italian movement in all its acts and results, now in the name of a pretended universal suffrage without truth or liberty, and now in that of a pretended fact which dates from yesterday and is still rudely questioned, we should rather apply to this great event the rules of public justice and sound judgment; we ought to disentangle from it, on the one side, all that it comprises of natural and legitimate; on the other, all that it includes of factitious and unjust; we ought to de-

termine in what degree it is compatible with European order, the rights of other nations, the liberties and general interests of Christianity. On this condition only can a permanent system be established in Italy; and the only system which can meet this condition interdicts nothing to the Italians which they have a necessity for demanding and a right to insist upon.

CHAP. XXI.

THE ITALIAN CONFEDERACY.

WHAT do the Italians wish for? Independence without, free government within. The Italian confederacy assured these advantages to them better than can the Piedmontese dominion under the name of Italian unity.

Unity of government is not, and never has been, the natural and necessary consequence of unity of race and speech. History abounds in examples of peoples of the same origin, speaking the same language, known in the world under the same name, and who have not lived under a single government, who would have regarded that union as their ruin, and would have enthusiastically defended themselves from it. What was Greece but an assemblage of small independent states united together by community of tongue and descent, and under pressing conjunctions, by a sort of federal bond? And in

modern times, do not the Swiss Cantons, the United Provinces of Holland, the United States of America, in spite of remarkable differences, present the same features ? And through the storms of their destiny, have not these nations lived happily and gloriously under the federative system, at once united and distinct, in different degrees and under various forms ?

The four confederacies I have just named were subjected to precisely the same trial which Italy undergoes at present. Greece, Switzerland, Holland, and the United States of America have had to defend or conquer their independence abroad, their liberty at home. Have they been found wanting under this rough task ? Have they not become and continued nations — free and independent nations — without having recourse to complete unity of government ?

Undoubtedly, the federal system has its difficulties and adverse chances ; what system has them not ? But ancient and modern history are at hand to prove that between peoples of the same race and language, confederations, or rather union without unity, may prove itself the most natural and effective of all systems for the advancement of independence and liberty.

The Italians have a right to object when it is said

that the word *Italy* is merely a geographical designation. I have more than once disputed with the Prince de Metternich this idea, which he adopted with the complaisance of an inventor for the advantage of the Austrian policy. When millions of people have borne for ages the same name, spoken the same language, regarded the same eminent men as their fathers, and the same master-pieces of mind as their common glory, it is an ungracious task to refuse them their intimate relationship and title as a nation. But it is also a capital error on their part, and may be a fatal one, to assume that their relationship calls them all to the same system, and not to believe that they are a nation unless they all live under one and the same government. Not only is confederacy a natural and possible system in Italy, but a system which, in our days, presents to the Italians fewer difficulties and more chances in their favour than at any other epoch of their history.

The principal obstacle to the establishment and durable success of an Italian confederacy was formerly the excessive parcelling out of the country, and the great number of independent States, for the most part extremely small, which the federal union would have had to unite. Between such multiplied

and unequal elements a cordial understanding was very difficult, and dissolving intrigue abundantly easy. Internal dissensions and foreign plots interfered at every moment to counteract the plans or break the engagements of the union. Nothing of the kind can be apprehended now; already much reduced in number since the middle ages, the Italian States will become more so under the influence of passing events: there are defeats, weaknesses, and extinctions to which the most conservative policy is compelled to submit. The Italian confederacy would henceforth be comprised within a very limited aggregate; all sufficiently equal in force to preserve independence in the bosom of their union, and all great and high enough in the political sphere to comprehend and accept the necessities of the bond which would unite them.

Such are, moreover, the geographical configuration of Italy and her position in Europe, that she is naturally called, and as it were devoted, to a defensive policy. The destiny of nations and places is full of strange contrasts. In ancient times it was Italy that invaded the world; it was from Rome that the greatest wars of aggression emanated which the world has ever endured; and since that epoch, after having

subdued all, Italy has incessantly seen herself a prey to conquest, and under the constant necessity of protecting herself from her various assailants. In the present state of Europe it is evident that Italy could never resume the offensive; a defensive attitude and policy are alone suited to her position. The federal system is well adapted to both, and the Italian States would find in their confederacy powerful guarantees for the independence of their common country, and against all yearnings of aggressive ambition on the part of any one or more of the united States.

And amongst the confederated Italian States which would be first called upon to secure the independence of Italy from foreign interference, Piedmont would be more than ever capable of fulfilling that mission. Enclosed between France and Austria, ever exposed on its different frontiers, and possessing forces very inferior to its wants, this small power, under the hand of the able house which rules it, has succeeded in maintaining its own independence for centuries, and in holding a position in Europe far beyond its actual strength; having now become much more powerful, as possessor of the north of Italy, it would prove for the whole peninsula a vast and effective shield. There scarcely can be a more

painful sight than that of a people and government who deceive themselves as to their natural capability and true destiny. Piedmont is as little adapted to the conquest of Italy as it is well suited to its defence. France, impelled by the revolution, and led by the Emperor Napoleon, failed in the attempt to conquer Europe, and to unmake and re-create states and dynasties at her pleasure. Piedmont undertakes an analogous enterprise in Italy. Favourable circumstances and powerful alliances may confer momentary success; but alone it has neither the position nor strength requisite to accomplish and maintain such designs.

The system of confederacy in Italy would be as propitious to liberty as to national independence. At the remembrance of what has passed, and in presence of what is now passing in Italy and in Europe, the sovereigns of the Italian States, whatever they might be, would, willingly, or through necessity, rally round the liberal institutions evidently become indispensable. And these institutions would be essentially liberal, for they would respect the sentiments and traditions of the different populations. They would not begin by imposing on them the abdication of a national name, a foreign sovereign, and a fac-

titious unity. They would admit, in the forms and guarantees of liberty, those natural variations which diversity of situation and history demands. They would not require that imperious uniformity and that development of military force which constitute the almost inevitable burden of great States, and the sad necessity of new ones whose doubtful grandeur is derived from conquest.

Finally, the Italian confederacy (and this would be its most precious merit) would suppress the question of Rome, that paramount difficulty which Italian unity is driven to solve by the spoliation of the papacy, and which presses like a fatal judgment on the new kingdom of Italy. I admit, in favour of that kingdom, the most promising chances; that France may withdraw her troops from Rome; that Piedmont may establish itself there; that the parliament of Turin may remove to that central point;—can it be supposed that the Roman question would then be settled? It would, on the contrary, burst forth in all its gravity. Nations require material facts, great external signs, to enable them to comprehend events, and to receive from them those leading impressions which reveal their full scope. As long as the dispute between the papacy and the new kingdom of Italy is

confined to the possession of certain territories and to erudite questions on the organisation of the Church, the Catholic populations in France, Spain, and Germany, wherever they exist, are not profoundly moved or troubled; they have not enthusiastic ardour enough to precipitate themselves in advance of alarms; they are told, and they readily believe, that these are merely questions of ambition and policy, in which religion is not seriously involved. But if they saw the seat of the papacy invaded, the Pope a fugitive, the Catholic Church shaken in its foundations, and anxiously demanding its government, capital, right, and repose, then the Catholic populations would feel the blow, and display their resentment. The French republic died on the scaffold of Louis XVI. What would become of the new kingdom of Italy in presence of the Pope dethroned, wandering and begging in the midst of the Christian world?

We are bound to believe in the natural and spontaneous instincts of great minds; above all, when those instincts give warning of the perils attached to their own temptations, and of the conditions under which their hopes can be realised. At different epochs, and in very different situations, M. Rossi and I,—a long time before the Roman embassy was pro-

posed to him, and at the moment when he was appointed to it,—in the full liberty of our thoughts, and in presence of our mutual responsibility, frequently conversed together on the future of Italy. He had no hope for her independence, except through the aid of France, in the midst of a great European crisis; but it was always in the confederative system that he saw the guarantee for that hope, and for the establishment of liberty. And when the revolutionary crisis of 1848 arrived, when Pius IX. committed to the hands of M. Rossi the expectations of Italy and the safety of Rome, it was towards the commercial and military union of the principal Italian states that M. Rossi directed his first efforts. He was preparing the Italian confederacy when the blow of the assassins struck him.

Let the lives and writings of the great Italian patriots, of those towards whom Italy has evinced the highest degree of confidence and respect, of Count Balbo, the Abbé Gioberti, and M. Manini himself*, be referred to; the same answer will be

* I find, in a collection entitled *Documents and Authentic Fragments left by Daniel Manini, President of the Republic of Venice, translated from the original, with notes, by F. Planat de la Faye*

furnished by all. Through all their illusions and schisms, as long as their judgment was free, as long as they listened only to their own convictions and the interest of their country, the confederacy of Italy, either monarchical or republican, was their first thought, their most cherished hope, and the object of all their efforts.

By what fatality, and under what influence has this great idea been suppressed? What causes have substituted the violent labour of Italian unity for the natural desire of confederation?

The ambition of Piedmont! It is thus that the

(t. i. p. 264), the following paragraph from a letter addressed on the 7th of June, 1848, by M. Manini to M. de Cormenin :

“Under existing circumstances, the *unity* of Italy is not possible ; but it is necessary that Italy should be *unified* ; that is to say, that there should be a confederacy of Italian States, and for this object, that no one of the confederated States should be stronger than the others ; for an association cannot exist with security where there is too great a disparity of forces. It is also essential that the different States, in their composition and extent, should found themselves on historical traditions, that populations differing in manners and origin should not be joined together, for in that case civil war would succeed the war of independence. Finally, it is indispensable that the republican form of government should not be interdicted to any particular State that might find itself ripe to assume it, and which might object to pass through the transitional form of constitutional monarchy.

conscience of Europe answers the question. I have no desire to dispute the reply. Nevertheless, I do not think that Piedmontese ambition is the only or even the leading cause of this sudden transfer of the feelings and efforts of the Italians. In great political dramas, and especially at their opening, the general ideas and passions of peoples or parties play a superior part to that of the interests and egotistical passions of the actors. The republican party in Italy were the first patrons and ardent propagators of Italian unity. It was through the incessant action of M. Mazzini and his adherents that this idea expounded itself and obtained credit. By degrees people became accustomed to see in it the only means of expelling the foreigner and of conquering the independence of Italy. The path they had been compelled to follow, and the nature of the arms they had employed when engaging in the struggle, of necessity conducted to this result. It was by means of secret association and conspiracy that the Austrian rule was attacked and undermined. To render conspiracy successful, it was reduced to seek in all the Italian States and governments the hearts and hands ready for its service; thus the first Italian army of independence recruited itself, and in the

name of Italian unity that recruiting was accomplished. Setting aside this necessity of position, minds are disposed in the present age to receive with favour the idea of great national unities, whether republican or imperial; this idea gratifies both ambition and vanity. Nation or individual, no one wishes to be insignificant; all persuade themselves that they may become great; and now-a-days greatness is estimated by the numbers counted and the space occupied; a coarse and subversive materialism, which, if it could definitively prevail, would be as fatal to the liberty as to the repose of human society. It is neither number nor space, but the quality of men and ideas which constitutes their greatness; history teems with small illustrious States and with great obscure nations. I trust that this childish propensity for territorial and nominal extent of country may never become the predominating and permanent passion of men; but it is certain that to-day, under the influence of the imposing scenes which Europe has contemplated, and the absorbing temptations they have excited, the tendency to vast political unities is powerful, and readily seduces the heads of nations and the nations themselves. The ambition of Piedmont has fostered this tendency as it has encouraged

republican conspiracy ; it has given its hand to the two great levers of the day — the spirit of revolution and the spirit of conquest ; and it is thus that unity, a violent idea, and one much less liberal in reality than in appearance, has assumed in Italy the place of federation, a far more natural and less onerous guarantee for the national liberty and independence of the peninsula.

CHAP. XXII.

FRANCE IN ITALY.

I SHALL not go back beyond the peace of Villafranca. I shall not inquire whether the war waged against Austria in Italy for the benefit of Piedmont was good policy on the part of France. The point is still in debate whether Louis XVI. was right in supporting by force of arms the British colonies of America in their lawful insurrection against England. These are questions so complicated, that even after the events they remain doubtful and obscure. Unforeseen facts ever intrude themselves to counteract the resolutions and combinations which the most skilful politicians have prepared and adopted. The definitive merit of these combinations does not depend solely on their immediate success, but also on the conduct pursued by their originators after that success, and in proportion as the long consequences of the struggle develop themselves. If the French

revolution had not broke out shortly after the American war, or if Louis XVI., instead of being a weak and virtuous martyr, had been a great monarch, capable of directing a great national movement in France, as America had supported one in opposition to England, the wisdom of that American war and armed intervention in aid of a people against their government, would never have been disputed. We never calculate beforehand all possible contingencies, we never hold in our hands all the threads of those lofty enterprises mingled with good and evil, with justice and violence; and even with the most natural and best concerted, fortune takes a large share, and often proves how little human prescience and power avail in the task when they have such problems to solve and such burdens to endure.

It has been said that France is the only nation that makes war for an idea. Heaven forbid that I should forget the noble disposition of my country to adopt that course for a great conception, or a generous design, and to place public force boldly at the service of public feeling! Nation or individual, "man does not live by bread alone:" the wants of the mind have as much claim to be satisfied as those of the body, and moral sentiments contribute much more to

the greatness of States than political calculations. But the noblest propensities require restraint; ideas as well as interest must be founded on reason, and war is not the natural mode of demonstrating the legitimacy of ideas. I trust that the progress of civilization and liberty may not freeze the heart of France; but I hope also that she will learn more and more to form a just estimate of her instincts before obeying them, and to consider maturely, in her resolutions, all the rights and interests involved in the questions to be solved and the enterprises undertaken.

After the success of the campaign in Italy, the peace of Villafranca was a bold and judicious act, which however involved the serious objection of leaving incomplete the declared object of the war — the expulsion of Austrian rule; but which, after an immense advance towards this end, restored the policy of France in Italy to its lawful independence and natural maxims. What are those maxims? What is the natural and national policy of France towards Italy? This is the question that concerns us, and the only one I wish to approach.

In every State judiciously governed, foreign policy depends essentially on internal policy. It is accord-

ing to the situation and disposition of the country at home that its conduct abroad should be regulated. Diplomacy, whether peaceful or warlike, ought to be carried on under the image of the nation itself, for its service and according to its bent.

The following are, to-day, in their essential and general features, the internal state and dispositions of France.

France is liberal and not revolutionary. Many revolutionary excitements are still active in her bosom ; many revolutionary prejudices and practices are still rife amongst us, even where the revolutionary spirit is no longer in a state of ferment. But in her free thought and will, France now rejects revolution. No great national interest, no powerful public sentiment inclines her in that direction ; she may be driven into it by surprise, but as soon as she discovers the danger she resists it with ardour, and satisfied, on the whole, with her social state, she returns, at any cost, towards order and the system capable of securing it. It has been said elsewhere, that we must accept revolution to attain liberty ; France sacrifices liberty to escape from revolution.

France no more aspires to conquests than to new revolutions ; filled with reminiscences of her glory,

she gratifies herself by reanimating them, and in finding herself ever strong and brilliant in war; but she also feels that she no longer requires war for her independence and greatness; at times, the emotions of that arena attract and charm her; but she has no wish to continue in it; in the main, she is pacific; and by a just instinct of her great moral and material interests she hurries back to peace when she fears to lose it for a lengthened period, as she also returns to order when she sees it seriously compromised.

France is at the same time Catholic and profoundly attached to religious liberty; faith and doubt, zeal and indifference, reciprocally claim this privilege; at one time faith, at another indifference; to-day Christians, to-morrow unbelievers, demand it; but liberty is equally necessary to all, and none would suffer it to be taken from them or permanently withheld. We have still, in the matter of religious liberty, much progress to make; in our laws and habits it is much less complete and assured than we like to acknowledge; real and practical liberty, in worship and conscience, is more general and better secured in certain other Christian countries than in ours. In religion as in policy, in spiritual as in civil life, the possession of equality consoles us for what

is incomplete and precarious in liberty. Because religious creeds are not taken into consideration in the exercise of public rights, because unbelievers as well as Christians, Protestants and Jews, in common with Catholics, enter freely into all careers and attain all the employments of the State, we too easily forget that religious liberty is sometimes wanting to one sect and sometimes to another, either fettered by laws, or ill supported and even compromised by manners and habits. But these are the difficulties and natural delays of the great transformation decreed amongst us in the relations of civil and religious society, of the Church and the State. In the midst of all the obstacles it encounters and the efforts it demands, this transformation accomplishes and establishes itself from day to day; while ceasing to be exclusive and predominant, the old faith has not perished. France remains essentially Catholic, but in presence of and under the law, as also with the benefits of liberty.

Such has France become internally, and for her own advantage. Such ought she to show and conduct herself externally in her relations with foreign states, especially with the Italians, of all her neighbours those whose destinies are to-day the most in question,

and over whom she is naturally called upon to exercise the greatest influence. France, liberal but not revolutionary, owes her favour to the efforts of Italy for independence and liberty, but not to Italian revolutions. France, pacific and divested of all aggressive views, requires that no foreign power shall command in Italy; but not that one of the Italian States should invade and absorb the rest. France, at the same time catholic and liberal, ought to protect religious liberty in Italy, but on condition that the Catholic Church shall also be free, and preserve its independence, constitution, and rights. Why assist another to violate the law of nations in Italy while professing to respect it throughout Europe? Why favour the conquests of another power when seeking none on her own account? Why erect a great power by her side without becoming greater herself? I do not think that, even for Italy, this policy can be sound; but beyond all doubt it is not the natural and national policy of France towards that country; it is inconsistent and profitless; equally repugnant to French interests and principles.

I have no desire to scrutinize and bring to light what I consider important errors on the part of the

government of my own country; still less does it please me to trace the motives for those errors in sentiments and intentions, which no power that entertains self-respect ought to avow. I would rather confine myself to the error alone, to those false views and vain apprehensions which often, in the conduct of governments, produce more important effects than evil designs.

The peace of Villafranca restored the policy of France in Italy to its independence and natural maxims; but it failed to solve all the questions or to suppress all the passions now actively fermenting amongst the Italians. It left erect and in full excitement the revolutionists, the advocates for unity, the Sicilian, Neapolitan, and Roman malcontents, and above all, the ambition of Piedmont, adroit in fostering all these elements of discord, and in making them the instruments of her own views. How are they to be restrained? How prevent the new disorders so ostentatiously presenting and announcing themselves? How ensure to Italy that policy of peace and national rights so recently proclaimed?

There was, it is said, but one method of attaining that end; to restrain the Italians, force should have been used, the same force by which they had just

been emancipated; the armed intervention of France could alone maintain, in their states, the Pope, the King of Naples, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and check or govern revolutions. Such a course was impracticable; armed intervention would have been illegal; the independence of peoples, universal suffrage permitted it not. In this dilemma, the principle of non-intervention, absolute and general, was laid down; and under the shelter of this principle, Italian revolution and Piedmontese ambition have pursued their unfettered course.

This was a line of policy too much restricted, and its authors have not a sufficiently expansive idea of the power possessed by those who have the honour of governing France. No one can be more opposed than I am to armed intervention in the internal affairs of States; every nation has a right to regulate its own destinies, and non-intervention is a most just and wholesome principle, a derogation from which can only be justified by an urgent national interest. But armed intervention is not the only means of action at the disposal of foreign policy; by the side of force, a great nation possesses influence; and influence, to those who know how to use it, is scarcely less effective than force. At the present moment we have a

brilliant example of this before our eyes: Did England send armies to Italy? Did she gain battles there? Physically she has done nothing; nevertheless she weighs heavily in Italian affairs; by her attitude alone, by her language, she exercises a powerful influence over parties and events. By the same means France could, and ought to become more important still; and the evidences of power she has lately exhibited in that theatre are doubtless enough to secure her effectual agency without the necessity of employing her armies.

In our days, above all others, and under our system of European publicity, the policy of influence has many chances of success; its means of action are more varied, and infinitely better graduated than those of force. According as it wishes to promote or check, it can proceed, at first by friendly advice, then by extending or contracting diplomatic relations, and finally by those indirect aids or impediments which do not amount to the employment of force, but which open it in perspective, and as if suspended over the cause it is intended to assist or shackle. We acted thus from 1833 to 1838, in our relations with Spain; we abstained from all armed intervention in her domestic commotions; but we

openly acknowledged and supported by every means of influence I have here alluded to, the constitutional monarchy founded after the death of Ferdinand VII.; and that policy, while fully respecting the laws of nations, was not deficient in efficacy and success.

I grant that it has exalted and difficult conditions; it does not admit in the line of conduct proposed to be followed, and in the limits within which it is to be confined, vague ideas and unsettled resolutions, for uncertainty and vacillation kill influence. To be effectually exercised, influence must act upon defined notions and fixed principles. And these notions and principles require to be publicly manifested and ready to sustain, under any possible contingencies, public discussion and its trials; for publicity is an indispensable weapon of political influence. It is by publicity that it operates upon minds, and renders itself comprehensible and acceptable, either to the country over which it is exercised, or to the European populations, the spectators and judges of passing events. To these conditions for success, the policy of influence may add another, — perseverance, and patience in perseverance. By a judicious use of right and time, a resort to force may

be dispensed with, but such a result is well worthy of being attained on such terms ; and this policy is pre-eminently suited to free peoples and governments ; for if it imposes on them a difficult task, it relieves them from embarrassments and dangers for more serious than the accompanying difficulties.

Let it not then be said that armed intervention alone could have modified the course of events in Italy, and that it was necessary to declare war against the independence of States to secure respect for the law of nations. This is to misunderstand the character of these events, the resources of policy, and the authority of France. What has taken place in Italy since the peace of Villafranca has not been so spontaneous and uncontested that the material power of France was the only means of preventing it ; and if French influence had been decidedly employed clearly and consistently, so that no one could have mistaken it, I do not hesitate to affirm that it would have amply sufficed, without armed intervention, to establish, beyond the Alps, the national policy of France and the rights of nations.

CHAP. XXIII.

THE FUTURE OF EUROPE.

I SHOULD feel surprised if, amongst clear-sighted spectators of the actual position of Europe, I encountered one who was not impressed with profound anxiety.

It is not that people are either worse or more miserable to-day than they were formerly ; never, on the contrary, were they in a better condition ; never were manners more equable and gentle ; never was there in governments more real good feeling or prudent care for the different populations, or amongst the people a better disposition. Our generations have had their share, and no trifling one, in the miseries inherent to humanity ; but what we call the progress of civilization is not a falsity ; everywhere, in all degrees of social order, in all the relations and affairs of life, men acknowledge and feel its salutary effects.

Nevertheless European society is seriously disturbed ; institutions and creeds, laws and influences, public and private relations, all things are in question. Almost everywhere, the old edifice falls or totters, and we see not upon what solid foundation the new one is to be erected. In all quarters, confusion, incoherence, and uncertainty occupy men's minds, and either pass, or threaten to pass, into facts ; governments and peoples are at once agitated and fatigued ; the present inspires no security, the future offers no light ; and notwithstanding the indisputable progress of intelligence and social condition we live in darkness and upon ruins.

Our age has been, and is still, an epoch of inordinate hopes and immense miscalculations. Since 1789, three generations have already passed over, promising to themselves and to human society in general, a sum of liberty, prosperity, ease and happiness in life, infinitely superior to what man has hitherto possessed. And not alone have speculative minds, philosophers and philanthropists anticipated this flattering future ; these hopes have been universally expanded ; they have pervaded all classes, the most destitute and obscure as well as the most ex-

alted ; amongst rich and poor, with the learned and illiterate, with the perverted and upright, spirits have become excited, hearts have beat high, imaginations have revelled in the most brilliant perspectives. It is not a single Christopher Columbus, but many millions of men who aspire to conquer a new world.

Although success has been eminent upon many points, it is yet far from responding to desire and expectation. The difficulties were found to be more obstinate, the road longer, more laborious, more dangerous, and the new world less beautiful and easy of universal access than was expected. Doubt replaced confidence, and discouragement supplanted ardour. The zealots for liberty in particular became weary of sustaining such a prolonged struggle, and of persevering in so many efforts for such incomplete and disputed results. Political theories and unbounded hopes began to be mistrusted. People endeavoured to pause and settle themselves at the point attained ; the old maxims and those of the new interests which appeared satisfied were called upon to reconstruct together the society introduced in place of that destroyed by the spirit of innovation.

Reaction and revolution coalesced and reciprocally aided each other. The rule of a new absolute power replaced the search after liberty.

But here also, success, brilliant at first, was short, and followed by startling errors. Although exercised with genius and glory, the new absolutism was neither able to endure, nor to found a system which satisfied society; it lost itself in the intoxication and abuse of its own strength, a fatal consequence of its nature. In turn, its enthusiasts were beguiled in their confidence, the spirit of liberty reappeared on the ruins of the fallen power; and France, after this double experience, found herself face to face with the terrible problem of our age;—what is the new political edifice which will suit the new state of society, and how is it to be constructed so as to be permanent?

And it is not only in France, but in Europe, in the whole world, that these two mistakes, liberal and absolutist, have displayed themselves. In Austria, the clever Prince de Metternich saw absolute hereditary power perish in his hands. In Russia, the Emperor Nicholas had scarcely ceased to live, when his son, Alexander II., in his old States at least, resigned himself to the spirit of innovation and progress. Spain, that theatre of the cruel labours

of Philip II. in the cause of despotism, entered, when defending her independence, into the paths of liberty, and moves on in them, for nearly thirty years, with persevering although uncertain steps. Italy has recently rushed into them. And while in those countries where it had reigned with the greatest strength, the system of absolute power underwent all these checks, the liberal system has encountered new ones where to all appearance it was most firmly established. In France the constitutional monarchy was suddenly overthrown, and in the United States of America, the republic, that special mark for radical admiration and ambition, violently disorganises itself and plunges into the darkness of the future.

After so many alternating experiences and mistakes, the present moment ought to be propitious for a final understanding and settlement of the political system to which all modern society aspires. Liberals and absolutists, revolutionists and conservatives, governments and peoples, have all proved the vanity of their extreme pretensions and have hurried on to the utmost limits of their power. Nor can it be said that these great lessons have produced no effect; the spirit of equity, and a conviction of what, in matters

of political organization, is now either impossible or necessary, have made signal progress throughout all Europe; the classes hitherto exclusively dominant, no longer dispute the common rights of humanity, and show themselves everywhere disposed or resigned to accept the system of competition open to all degrees of merit. The middle classes have learned to mistrust social utopianisms, and to distinguish what conditions of public order are indispensable to the good internal order of families and to the prosperity of labour. Governments, with more or less intelligence and favour, have entered or are entering into the track of reform, and a policy regulated entirely by the general interests of nations and the tendencies of European civilization. In spiritual order, the antagonism between old faiths and new ideas becomes weaker; unbelief is no longer the passion of minds and the style of manners; the philosophy which is not materialistic wishes to be religious; there are many serious and sincere returns towards Christian faith and life; even when faith is wanting, the sentiment of public interest and of the rights of individual conscience maintains respect. In the higher and middling social regions, while liberty is practised and developed, the essential principles of moral and

political order resume their rank and a portion of their empire.

But while the storm disperses on these points of the horizon, it removes and increases elsewhere. The false ideas, the bad passions, the exaggerated hopes which have produced our faults and miscalculations, descend, expand themselves, and acquire added venom when they reach the popular masses, and excite amongst them blind and ardent ambitions no longer restrained either by religious faith, or by the discipline of old habits more and more attacked, shaken and uprooted. We cannot calculate the intensity, the rapidity with which the seeds of anarchy propagate and develop themselves amongst the innumerable anonymous crowds who have to endure through so many labours and privations the burden of life. It is always amongst these that the evil of the time ferments ; and it encounters not, in the social regions, where the experience of revolutions has infused its light, the inclinations, shall I say the virtues, which alone can repress or cure them. Doubt cannot conquer fanaticism, neither can weakness struggle effectively with exuberant passion. At present, the classes naturally called to direct society, abandon themselves to doubt, to weakness, to an in-

telligent and restrained, but worn out and frivolous egotism. To be equal to this task requires more self-confidence, a more distinct reliance on individual thoughts and rights; inasmuch as harsh, immoveable and obstinate policy is incapable to-day of governing peoples, so does authority equally require that concert, between maxims and acts, that vigour in resolutions and language, and that independence and sympathy which command, at once, confidence and respect.

This is what, in our days, is too often wanting to the social influences and political powers placed at the head of States, and herein especially lies the peril of the European future. The force of evil in this world is less formidable than the weakness of good, and if just ideas displayed themselves boldly, false principles would find a more restricted field of action. And it is not alone in the internal government of states that this hesitation, this inconsistency, this weakness on the part of the natural guardians of order, prevail; the mischief has penetrated to external policy; it enervates and corrupts the language and conduct of the great European governments in presence of the commotions which break out in Europe. Some—Russia and Prussia, for instance—remain surprised and as if stupefied,

neither knowing nor daring how to distinguish in such events, what is just or unjust, natural or factitious, rational or impracticable, and then renounce judgment and action as if they were compelled to wait for and submit to the decrees of fatality. Others,—and especially England,—either from party influence, or from frivolous views of interest, give to foreign revolutions an indistinct adhesion, and accept indiscriminately their extravagances and their reforms, their usurpations and attacks against the law of nations, in common with their most legitimate claims and enterprises. Called on to declare themselves and to exercise their influence in the confused conflicts between good and evil, truth and falsehood, progress and chimeras, nearly all the leading European States abdicate their natural and lofty mission; some acknowledge their impotence, others sink into accomplices.

Nothing, I am aware, is so common as self-delusion as to the consequences of a particular situation, when they do not appear to be material or imminent; rulers and ruled live on the present, and voluntarily close their eyes to the future when it threatens to reveal their faults and disturb their repose. Nevertheless, foresight is one of the most

essential conditions, not only of security but of power; and those only can influence the destiny of States who occupy themselves with the morrow. It is thus, if I am not mistaken, that the question of the future presents itself at present with regard to Europe.

Peoples and governments are placed under an imperious alternative; they are bound to reconcile the new ideas and necessities which disturb them with the eternal principles of order and justice, or they must enter upon an era of decline. If we do not succeed in founding under different forms, according to places and circumstances, a liberal system capable of harmony and permanence, we must submit indefinitely to those varieties of revolution and reaction, of anarchy and despotism which may prolong themselves even with brilliancy, but which gradually and certainly deteriorate, demoralize, and subvert all nations. We cannot stop, we cannot retrace the course of ages; we cannot support the old system, which totters in every direction; we cannot re-establish it on its own ruins. And if, on the other hand, we abandon ourselves to the revolutionary current, if, in endeavouring to obtain acknowledgment and triumph for the new rights developed by time, we

forget and violate all the old rights which time has consecrated, if we persuade ourselves that to take possession of the new world we must utterly overturn the old, we shall not be more successful in raising the new edifice on solid foundations than in reinstating that which had fallen. When great contests arise in the bosom of human societies, when powerful parties wage bitter strife, none of them are entirely in the right ; truth and justice do not reside in one camp alone. A conqueror is necessary to finish the struggle ; but if the conqueror intends to seize everything and to establish his empire on oblivion of the rights of the conquered, he will not become a legitimate or permanent master, and peace will fail to follow war. In our days, after all the experience we have had, and all the trials we have endured, the victories which establish peace are obtained at a higher price ; without as well within, in the foreign relations of States, as in the internal life of the people, they must respect relative rights, constitutional and national, and must acknowledge the liberty of all, of the vanquished as well as of the victors.

Six years ago, in 1855, when witnessing the distress and despondency of the greater portion of my

friends, I found it necessary to say why I did not participate in their convictions, and I wrote a few pages, which I take the liberty of reproducing here, for although they apply directly to France, and it was France alone I had in view, they express ideas and sentiments, conformable, as I think, with the general state of Europe, and the truth of which is still more striking now than it was at that earlier period. The Christian Church was not then in question; laical society and France alone were involved. The tempest has expanded itself; the Church as well as the State, Europe in common with France is exposed to its effects; and if Italy is at this moment its principal theatre, France must answer for the events in which in Italy to-day, as in Europe for three quarters of a century, she has been the most prominent actor.

OUR ERRORS AND OUR HOPES.

(March 31st, 1855.)

“I encounter two classes of persons whose dispositions sadden and disturb me; the first attach

themselves obstinately and under any possible contingencies to what they have once believed and wished; the second readily abandon cherished prepossessions, with or without regret, when the evil time comes. The first learn nothing, the second forget everything. On the one part they are incurably blind, on the other, timidly egotistical or despondingly doubtful. These are two methods of losing good causes; for to gain them requires conviction and clear judgment, the vivid light of experience and the enduring enthusiasm of faith. Let us enlighten ourselves while we persevere; on this double condition alone, God imparts strength and permits success.

“We have committed many errors. I wish to state, according to my own idea, what they have taught us, and what they leave us a right to expect.

“In 1789, there was a general confidence that man is naturally virtuous, desirous of good, and almost always disposed to do good, if, instead of leaving him free, the vices of social institutions and the abuses of power were not incessantly interfering to irritate, bewilder, or corrupt him. Philosophers asserted this; the public believed it. I once heard a man of intelligence, a fervent and sincere disciple of that school, affirm seriously that the forest-keepers

were the principal causes of rural crimes. The offences as well as the misfortunes of subjects were laid to the charge of government, and it was no longer the individual man, but general society which had to answer for all.

“A confidence overflowing with fascination for self-love and for the heart. Not only does man thus obtain relief from a heavy burden, but nothing then interfering to hinder him from being pleased with himself and with his fellow-creatures, he can surrender himself up to the indulgences of sympathy and the pleasures of egotism, to benevolence and pride. All that was said, written, or done in 1789 attests the simultaneous empire of these two sentiments, so opposite in their nature; man had faith in humanity as in himself; he was at the same time presumptuous and full of kindness, impressed with his own merit and generously sensible to the merit of others.

“While believing himself, in 1789, essentially good, man also fancied himself powerful, almost omnipotent. With the sentiment of his inherent malignity, the conviction of his weakness also disappeared. If evil is only an accident, produced by external causes, and not an inherent fact, belonging to the

nature of man, it belongs to man to avoid or repair it. If the miseries of the human condition and even human vices are only the result of bad institutions and of the abuse of force, why should not man be able to abolish them? Wisdom can cure the consequences of error, science those of ignorance, just and well-organised force those of selfish and brutal power. Man did not create evil, but it rests with him to repair and reform it, to reconstruct human society. Chaos is before him; it is his privilege, as he has the means, to instil into it light and order. Impressed with boundless ambition as with unlimited esteem for humanity, our fathers in 1789 believed that they sought nothing but good, and that they had the power of effecting all the good they sought.

“They felt, moreover, for their own age, an admiration full of pleasure and hope. It was an epoch of new lights, rapid progress, and expanded civilization. Manners were softened, minds developed, ideas propagated visibly and generally, life became for all easy and animated; throughout society there was a lively and fertile excitement, a kind of eager and universal blooming, as occurs in nature at the breath of spring. What a powerful seduction was there in the triple faith of believing that man was

good and powerful, and had reached the day for displaying his goodness and power for the general advantage!

“A seduction replete with error and danger! Error and danger which, since 1789, experience, from year to year, places in clearer light!

“The truth, as regards man’s nature, is in the Christian faith; it is in man himself that evil resides; he is inclined to evil. I do not wish here to enter upon theology, but I use these terms without hesitation, as the most precise and clear; the dogma of original sin is the religious expression and application of a natural fact, the innate propensity of man to disobedience and license. I hold this fact as evident to the eyes of every one who examines himself with sincerity. To surmount it, man requires two restraining powers; an internal check, faith in God and in his moral laws; an external one, human laws, and an authority capable of making them respected. Where one of these checks is wanting, the other is insufficient; the force of human laws alone is powerless to regulate and bridle men in whom the moral law is deficient; and to preserve its empire over men, the moral law requires the aid of human laws. Given up entirely to its own bias, whether

internally or externally, the human heart forgets and loses itself.

“Why is it not permitted to us to communicate beyond the grave, with our fathers, to hear their voices, and receive their counsels! What would they not tell us of their error as to the natural goodness of man, and of their grief when a sinister conviction presented itself to their eyes! It is a bitter mistake to dream of the happiness of humanity, and to wake and find it plunged in tears and blood: but to dream of its virtue, its innocence, and to fall suddenly into its vicious and unbridled passions, is a more heart-rending error still. The spectacle of human wretchedness wounds the soul; that of man’s vices and crimes utterly prostrates it. Moral evil is of all evils the most hideous to contemplate. Our fathers in 1789 were condemned to pass from perspectives of paradise to scenes of hell. May God preserve us from forgetting them!

“They lost at the same time their confidence in the omnipotence of man, and in his virtue. They believed themselves masters of all things, able to reform and reconstruct society according to their ideas and wishes, competent to dispose of social facts, as of any inert matter that they might reject or

mould at will. Everywhere they encountered resistance, often blind and always vehement. They were taught that old facts, even when worn out through time and called to a necessary regeneration, do not suffer themselves to be handled at the pleasure of new convictions. These facts, treated with so much contempt, institutions, creeds, manners, royalty, nobility, clergy, parliaments, civil or religious corporations, all the old French society, did not passively consent to perish. To triumph over it no means or excesses were omitted; fire and sword were employed against it; and when the work of fire and sword was accomplished, the conquerors found themselves unexpectedly powerless; they were unable to realise the plans in the name of which they had overthrown the old building; to construct the new one, they were obliged to use the stones they had broken, to retread the paths they had filled with ruins;—royalty, the court, the nobility, the clergy, the old maxims and forms, all reappeared; the young elements of society hastened to clothe themselves in the old costumes, to dwell under the old shelters. Even in its greatest days the power of man moves within narrow limits; it bows to the empire of the laws it disavows, of the facts it over-

throws, of the traditions it repudiates. It has two masters, God and time; when it pretends to shake off their yoke or to dispense with their support, it speedily falls again, encountering nothing in its flight but emptiness, and crushed under its own weight.

“As in regard to the natural goodness and power of man, so did our fathers deceive themselves in their estimate of their own time, of its merits, and the value of its progress — an error natural and common to all ages. What age does not love and admire itself? but the eighteenth century was destined to be carried, and suffered itself to be carried, beyond all others, in that road. What advancement can exceed that, in the eyes of enlightened men, which makes mind the first of social influences? This was the true feature of the eighteenth century; never did purely intellectual merit afford so much enjoyment to its possessors; gratifications at once of justice and of pride. They celebrated the epoch which gave them empire. The eighteenth century was, moreover, an aggressive epoch, an era of criticism and attack upon prevailing facts and established powers; an easy superiority which willingly arrogates to itself all others. Considered in a point of view purely philo-

sophical, and in their connection with the essence of things, the ideas of that age, whether in regard to man or society, were not always elevated or profound; others have gone further in knowledge of human nature and of the conditions of social order. But in a critical sense, and in its struggle with the errors and vices of declining powers and systems, the eighteenth century obtained a ready victory; and while, in the infatuation of triumph, it plunged men into the intoxication of hope, it lavished on them magnificent and undefined promises, with prospects of a future equally happy and glorious, and which they would owe to themselves alone. It was an age, not only of impassioned sympathy with, but of idolatrous adulation of human nature, and in this point especially it ceased to be Christian.

“Of all idolatries none so rapidly reveals and decries itself as that which has man for its object. The idol was broken before the eighteenth century disappeared.

“I pass from 1789 to 1830, and from the mistakes of our fathers to those of our own time and of ourselves.

“The year 1830 bore no resemblance to 1789. There was no grand and enthusiastic impulse of the

country towards an unknown future; no undefined pretensions and hopes. The movement was limited, not directed against the social state, but purely political. Amongst the men who co-operated in it, there were different desires and efforts: some sought only to develop by lawful means the constitutional system already established; others had an ill feeling towards the elder branch of the house of Bourbon, from remembrance of the disasters of 1814, or could not believe that under its reign new interests would be safe, or the constitutional system exercised in full vigour. Behind these latter marched the republican party and the anarchical factions, ardent and formidable, but still in the shade, and compelled to remain there, doubting their own strength and restrained by a consciousness of the terror they inspired. The national feeling, although excited and prepared for a revolution, went not beyond a change of dynasty and the extension of popular rights. Those who would have preferred stopping short of this point reckoned at least that it would not be exceeded. Those who were unwilling to go so far, promised themselves and their supporters that they would pause there. Those who aspired to go beyond, did not consider themselves yet in a position to suc-

ceed, and were contented to wait while ever pushing on in advance.

“The result agreed with this state of parties and spirits. In the bosom of a formidable excitement, and despite the confusion of its first steps, the young monarchy established and developed itself according to the idea of its foundation. Thus was, during eighteen years, under the flag of new France, the constitutional system sincerely accepted and liberally practised. The government of July has had to sustain many reproaches; one, at least, must be spared; it did what rational and responsible men demanded from it, and what it had promised; it was true to its mission and its end; it lived and fell within the circle of the Charter to which it had sworn.

“Why did it fall?

“Through its own faults, say its adversaries; through the faults of the king who governed too much, and of the ministers who governed badly. To those who hold this language I have at present nothing to say. I have no desire now to discuss the conduct of any one, either in government or opposition. But the more I reflect on the subject, the more I feel astonished that we should thus pause on the surface of things, and confine ourselves within

the narrow circle of political actors, when it is so easy, by a loftier and more extended view, to ascertain the true causes of our miscalculations and reverses.

“There are errors which I do not specially impute to any single person, and which are common to all the world, to the people as to the government, to opposition as to power. They are those which have ruined us, and for so many years have led France on from revolution to revolution.

“We are, in point of virtue, aptness, and political intelligence, far less advanced than we believe; we flatter ourselves mutually and incessantly, to the great damage of society at large.

“I speak of virtue at the risk of repeating a mere common-place term, which ceases to be one when it is forgotten. Liberty requires virtue. Nations are not capable of self-government except when minds can strongly govern themselves. I do not think I calumniate my own time when I say, that what it is specially deficient in, is, the steady self-government of minds. Moral virtue has not perished amongst us, but moral faith totters within us. In our days, we meet with much honesty of conduct and much weakness of conscience. The ordinary practice of

life is superior to the ordinary principles. There is much danger when the temptations of liberty go on increasing from day to day. We have paid too little attention to this moral evil of our age; we have evinced too much confidence in the empire of habit, of well understood interest, of legal repression, and of all external curbs. We have suffered ourselves to be lulled to sleep by the appearance of order. It may happen that order reigns on the surface of society, while at the same time, corrupting ideas and perverse sentiments expand themselves in the heart, and penetrate into those internal regions where gangrene rapidly wins its way if not repulsed by religion and virtue. We have left the public too much exposed to this secret contagion, to debasing spectacles, to pernicious reading, to bad examples, and to all evil influences. We have reckoned too much on national morality, while at the same time doing too little to defend or strengthen it. Liberty has wanted this counterpoise.

“ We have also placed too much confidence in our aptitude and enlightenment for a system of political liberty. Up to this time, the political education of France has been acquired in two schools, books and revolutions; masters either pernicious or unequal

to the task of teaching a people to govern themselves. To those who feed upon them, books impart a style of political intelligence, to a certain extent presumptuous and vague, and which qualifies them more to dogmatise and criticise than to decide and act. The influence of books, moreover, can only exercise itself on the surface, and over an extremely thin layer of society; we know not exactly the limited extent to which they penetrate, and at what point the mass of the population remains unacquainted with the ideas and knowledge which can only be propagated through that channel. It thus happens that when literature is the principal agent of political ideas, sympathy and intellectual equilibrium are broken between the higher classes and the people; they speedily cease to understand or think in common. Revolutions are a more extended and a more effectual school. They supply political lessons which penetrate in every quarter, but fail to carry everywhere true and patriotic lights. They expand and sharpen minds; while leading them from profitable paths; they corrupt, or chill, or enervate hearts; they propagate the worship of force and fraud, not that of justice and liberty; they engender libertines ready to profit by everything

cowards obedient to everything, and honest men discouraged by everything, who, in the day of trial shrink from public responsibility and shut themselves up in their private interests, believing that they are incapable of directing the affairs of their country. We compromise our own destiny when we consign all care of it to generations so little or so ill-prepared for government and liberty.

“We deceived ourselves as to the conditions of our government, as also on the moral strength and political progress of our society. On the day after a revolution, and in the midst of an attack of revolutionary fever, we endeavoured to found a monarchy, a free monarchy, and at our first steps in this great work we found ourselves in presence of a monarchical party profoundly divided; to defend power and law, we could only avail ourselves of a portion of the natural army of power and law. We were not discouraged; we did not, in consequence of the extreme difficulty, voluntarily circumscribe our duties and our ambition; we persisted in defending order, in respecting and enlarging liberty. As long as social peril was imminent, as long as the security and just interests of common life were menaced, the new power was found equal to its task; against its enemies of the old

system it opposed the forces of the revolution, and against its revolutionary foes, the forces of all the alarmed men of probity. But when the question of public order was settled, the question of political order returned; from the day on which the new monarchy appeared to be established, a great gap revealed itself in its foundations.

“I have constantly sustained the cause of the middle classes, which is my own, and in our contests I have had the honour of carrying their flag. Why should I hesitate to say to them, what, in 1843, M. Royer Collard said to me, on my own account: ‘You carry on a sound, rational, and honest policy; you do yourself much honour but you will not succeed; you have against you the legitimists and the revolutionists, fire from above and below; this is too much at a time.’ The middle classes have reason and justice on their side when they claim a considerable share, a preponderating influence in the government of France; but alone, they are unequal to govern. Twice, in 1789 and 1830, their victory deceived them; they thought that at the same time they could attack above and resist below, that they could destroy and establish. Experience has falsified their confidence. The present age does not admit this double

triumph; the anarchical ferment which traverses modern society is too vast and profound not to overwhelm conservative strength when divided. Its union and common action is scarcely enough to oppose successful resistance.

“I say *resistance*; for, let what may be said to the contrary, resistance is the leading mission of government; it is essentially to repress unlicensed desires that government is established. But that accomplished, there is yet more to be done; it has to second and direct the development of man and society in every sense, in moral and material order. Man is not placed on earth merely to live there, but to increase, to display, according to the laws and designs of God, the riches and resources of his nature. It is the object and condition of government to march at the head of humanity in the accomplishment of the great destinies of man. After long hesitations, serious mistakes, painful reverses, and intolerable alarms, society may throw itself into the arms of power, demanding only order, as the *sine quâ non* of its existence; but it does not long content itself with such a limited ambition; its active forces recruit themselves by repose; it springs up again; it aspires to resume the noble work of which it had become so weary, and to this it

must be conducted by its government. If the government neither will nor can do this, if it is incapable of lending itself to this mission of life and social progress, it soon ceases also to be capable of its mission of order and public security; and thus government and nation either separate by violent convulsions, or fall together into the apathy which announces decline and prepares death.

“Let the middle classes once more receive with patience this truth from a devoted friend; alone, they are utterly unequal to progress as to resistance, to liberty as to order. They play an eminent part in society; they exercise intellectual professions, and derive profit from material riches. They thus accomplish two important points; they perpetually support and renew social activity; they develop and bring to light the personal merit of new men, and place them in their just position. It is from them especially, and from their labours, that the ascending movement and expansive force of society emanate. But in acting this great character, the middle classes frequently run upon two rocks; at one time, yielding themselves up to impulse, they rush impetuously through passion or improvidence into experiments utterly opposed to their true advantage; at another,

wearied and alarmed by the crises they have themselves brought on, they become disgusted with politics, retire exclusively into domestic life, and seek only security for the private interests to which they confine their care. Alternately they rouse themselves to action, or submit passively, either exacting too much from, or yielding too submissively to, power; and thus order and liberty suffer equally from their rapid fluctuations. These dispositions of the middle classes require a counterpoise to restrain their enthusiasm and to strengthen their weakness; and this counterpoise is only to be found in the political influence of the classes whose fortune is more determined and their position more fixed, whose thoughts and time are less absorbed in the labour of personal interests, and who, bringing naturally to public affairs more methodical perseverance, are less liable to shift so suddenly from opposition to docility, and from docility to opposition.

“When it is considered desirable to excite the discontent or suspicions of the middle classes, people speak of aristocratic tendencies and a return to the old system. I have no desire to confront sentiments, the empire of which I am well aware of; neither can I resolve to remain so silent on the subject as

to abstain from probing things to the centre, and showing them as they are : I respect my country too much not to deal with it as frankly as with myself. I shall therefore repeat here what I recently said on this particular topic.

“When we examine human society in all places and times, through all the variety of its organization, government, extent, and duration, its species and degrees of civilisation, we shall find in all three, types of social condition ever essentially the same, although under widely distinct forms, and differently distributed :

“Men living on the revenue of their property, either landed or movable, estates, or capital in money, without seeking to increase it by personal labour :

“Men devoted to the cultivation or increase by personal labour of the property they possess, whether landed or movable, estates or capital, in money :

“And men living by the produce of their labour, without either estates or capital.

“These varieties and inequalities in the social condition of men are not accidental or special facts, applicable to any particular time or country ; they are universal facts, which produce themselves na-

turally throughout all human society, in the midst of the most opposite circumstances and under the impress of the most varied laws.

“What is the true interpretation, the real bearing of these facts? Can we find in them the old classifications of society? Would the old denominations of policy be applicable to them? Do they comprise an aristocracy in presence of a democracy, or rather a nobility, a middle class, and the popular masses? Do these diversities and inequalities of social and political condition form, or tend to form, a state of society hierarchically classified, and analogous to those previously existing in the world?

“No, certainly not. The words *aristocracy*, *democracy*, *nobility*, *citizenship*, *hierarchy*, do not exactly correspond with the facts which constitute modern French society, neither do they express those facts with sufficient accuracy.

“On the other hand, what is there in this society except citizens equal amongst themselves, and no classes really distinct; or, rather, distinctions and inequalities without political importance, nothing more than an extended and uniform democracy which seeks to satisfy itself in a republic at the risk of finding repose only in a despotism?

“Nothing more. Both conclusions equally misrepresent the actual state of our society. We must shake off the yoke of words and learn to look on facts as they really are. France is, at the same time, extremely new and full of the past. Under the empire of the principles of unity and equality which preside in her organization, she combines social conditions and political situations profoundly different and unequal. There is no hierarchical classification, but there are different classes. There is no aristocracy, properly so called, but there is something more than democracy. The true elements, essential and distinct, of French society, such as I have just described them, may oppose and weaken each other, but they cannot produce mutual destruction or annihilation; they resist and survive all the contests in which they engage, all the miseries they reciprocally inflict. Their existence is a fact beyond their power to abolish. Let them then unreservedly accept this fact. Let them live together and in peace. The liberty as well as the repose, the dignity and the prosperity, the greatness and security of France are only to be purchased at this cost.*

* Of Democracy in France (1849), pp. 76, 78, 99, 101.

“France has paid dearly for forgetting this necessity. The classes formerly and the classes recently predominating fell by turns into the same fatal error; by turns they suffered themselves to believe that, because they once triumphed, they were alone sufficient for all the great interests of society, for resistance and progress, for order and liberty; and, stricken in their disunion by the same impotence, they have by turns seen order and liberty, resistance and progress perish equally in their hands.

“I have enumerated our errors, as I believe, without exaggeration or concealment. They are great in themselves, and great in their practical consequences. This will be clearly seen; are we therefore to despair of our age and our cause?

“No one is farther from such a decision than I am.

“This would be to abandon hopelessly our whole history, the entire activity and destiny of France, or, I should rather say, of Europe for fifteen centuries.

“The present age is not a deviation from the past, an unforeseen accident, a strange inconsistency, a disease which comes casually to disturb the course

of a strong and flourishing health. We travel for fifteen centuries in the same paths, in which, in our own days, we have made such rapid advances and have encountered such heavy falls.

“A principle, an idea, a sentiment, as it is popularly called, hovers during fifteen ages over all European societies, — over French society in particular, — and presides at their development; the sentiment of the dignity and of the rights of every man, on his simple claim as man, and of the duty of extending more and more to all men the benefits of justice, sympathy, and liberty.

“Justice, sympathy, and liberty are not new facts in the world; they have not been invented within the last fifteen centuries. From the first day of creation, God implanted in man their seed and necessity. They have held their place and exercised their empire in all countries and in all times, in the bosom of all human associations. But before the birth of Christian Europe, fixed and nearly insurmountable limits marked or narrowly restrained the sphere of justice, sympathy, and liberty. Here, nationality; elsewhere, race, caste, servile origin, religion, colour, interdicted to an immense number of men, all access to these first benefits of social

life. Amongst the most distinguished nations, justice, sympathy, and liberty were denied without scruple to three fourths of the people. The most enlightened minds saw in this spoliation nothing more than a natural and necessary fact, an inherent condition of the social state.

“It is pre-eminently Christianity in principle and practice which has expelled this iniquity from men’s thoughts, and extended to all mankind the right of justice, sympathy, and liberty, until then confined to a small number and subjected to inexorable conditions. It was said of a great philosopher that the human race had lost their rights and that he restored them; an excessive and almost idolatrous piece of flattery. It was not Montesquieu, but Jesus Christ who restored to humanity its due privileges. Jesus Christ came to raise up man upon earth at the time that he redeemed him for eternity. The unity of God amongst the Jews, the unity of man re-established amongst Christians,—these are the commanding features which reveal divine action in man’s life.

“This restoration of man’s unity in the Christian world has neither been a rapid, nor a pure work, and much is yet wanting to its universal accomplishment.

Material interests, unlicensed passions, egotism, pride, indifference, violence, the necessities of the moment, the combinations of policy, have fettered, slackened, and polluted the development of the Christian idea, but it has never yielded or disappeared; ever present and struggling, it has taken into its service the most opposite instruments; at one time the Church, at another the sovereign; here the nobles, there the citizens, and elsewhere the multitude; to-day power, to-morrow liberty, have constituted themselves champions for the expansion of justice and sympathy, to the advantage of all human creatures. By choice or by force, from duty or from calculation, the whole world has in turn lent a hand to this great work; all ages, whether learned or ignorant, pious or unbelieving, have caused it to make steps in advance more or less toilsome or rapid. It has filled our history, and at every epoch has been looked upon as the most signal symptom of the progress of civilization, and even as civilization itself.

“The public sentiment has not deceived itself in giving it this name, and facts remarkably confirm it. In countries where Christian conviction has been boldly developed, in proportion as this common

right of humanity has spread and applied itself to a greater number of men, so has society increased in power, in activity, in fruitfulness, in prosperity, and in glory. Abysses have been met with in this career of Europe, and, far from avoiding, she has more than once precipitated herself into them; she has committed many mistakes, faults, and crimes; good and evil have mingled together in lamentable confusion; bitter and legitimate reproaches may be applied to our civilization; we can readily point out fatal wanderings in its ideas and acts; government and people, pious men and philosophers, aristocrats and democrats, conservatives and liberals of all countries and ages, have before God formidable accounts to render; and history has a right to demand them here, and to speak the truth of the dead for the instruction and welfare of the living. No epoch, no event, no system, no party can justly complain of being thus severely interrogated and judged; and what am I doing now when I probe, without mitigation, the errors of our fathers and our own? But this severity once exercised, our mistakes and our faults once acknowledged, these are the truths which endure. All Europe, and France in particular, has moved on during fifteen centuries in the same paths

of enfranchisement and general progress. These paths have conducted the nations which have entered into them with the most determined resolution to that high degree of power, prosperity, and greatness, which we call, and are entitled to call, modern civilization. This civilization is pre-eminently the fruit of that lofty idea that every man, on his simple claim as man, has a right to justice, sympathy, and liberty. This idea has its source in the Gospel; Jesus Christ inducted it into man's heart, to pass from thence into the social system.

“God does not deceive the human race. Nations do not constantly deceive themselves in the course of a long destiny: the abyss lies not at the end of fifteen centuries of ascending movement. What during so many ages has been a principle of life and progress, is not to-day a cause of decline and death.

“Another fact ought also to convince us of this; and the more so that it warns while it encourages, and comprises as much danger as hope.

“Our ruling passion, not precisely that of the present day, but that of 1789, and of our age in general, is ambition; ambition unlimited in thought and application, an ardent desire for change, novelty,

and progress. In moral and material order, in ideas, institutions, and manners, the spirit of innovation excites and carries men away; the past displeases them, they are dissatisfied with the present, they appeal to the future; at one moment, a future which they conceive and regulate according to their own fantasy; at another, an obscure, unknown future, no matter what may be its outline, provided only that it is new, and different from the established order, which appears hateful or insipid, oppressive or exhausted. This thirst for novelty, this fever of expectation, has engendered itself, for nearly a century, in all senses, under all forms, and in every gradation of society; it has given birth to those innumerable attempts to transform France and the world, to all those systems, revolutions, wars, conquests, constitutions, dynasties, and phantoms, which have flitted on in succession without satisfying or arresting us for more than a few days. At one time at the summit, at another amongst the intermediate regions of society, in the bosom of intellectual leisure, or in the activity of business, this enthusiasm for novelty and the future has taken its origin and support; and when the classes which at first encouraged and participated in it have either become undeceived or

tired; when they learned from experience that they looked for too much, and were now anxious only for rest, they discovered that this last desire was also futile, that the ferment had descended to the popular masses, and that amongst them, too, in that vast and obscure region, ambition, the ascending movement, the blind or reasoning impulse towards the future had taken possession of men, and urged them into paths utterly unknown. In presence of this menacing fact, we feel moved and disturbed; we fluctuate between sympathy and alarm; we yield and resist; concession, explosion, and repression succeed each other rapidly; each for a moment has played its part, but without reaching the source or end of things, without stifling or satisfying the spirit of ambition and innovation which circulates in our veins.

“Herein are assuredly comprised a serious evil and danger, but no symptom of decay; decay reveals itself by very different facts and signs.

“After fifty years of civil war, of fearful persecutions, crimes, and sufferings, the Roman republic fell; the Empire established itself in the name of a pressing, evident necessity, as the only means of restoring to the Roman world, internal peace and the security of private life, the first and most

essential object of the social state. But the Empire did not satisfy the wants and wishes of all the Romans. Its despotism and corruption, its adulation of the multitude, the perpetual falsehood of its appearances and language, deeply wounded the enlightened and haughty spirits, still numerous in the senate, amongst the equestrian order, the lawyers, the scholars, and the higher classes of that ancient society. All these required, in government and people, more liberty, dignity, and virtue. Where did they seek for them? In the past alone, in a return to the old Republic, to its maxims, laws, and manners. They neither desired nor conceived anything more, or less, or different. Let us ask the most glorious interpreters of that epoch; I shall name but two, Tacitus and Marcus Aurelius: both are sad, profoundly sad; they deplore, they despise their time, but they neither meditate nor conceive anything for its reformation; we cannot trace in their minds a glimpse of a future, or any perspective of a new moral or political order; the Republic, the ancient Rome which is no more, and cannot be resuscitated, is the single dream of their thoughts; they have reminiscences, but no new ideas; regrets, but no hopes.

“In a remote corner of the Empire, in the bosom of the most despised of the inferior colonies subjected to its laws, a small association was formed, in the most profound obscurity, and the humblest condition, but which God inspired with the loftiest and the most unheard of ambition;—the ambition of reforming man himself, all mankind throughout the world, and for all ages. There lay the power, for therein was comprised the new inspiration and impulse towards the future.

“Sterility is a certain symptom of decline, sterility of minds and hearts, when man neither plans, hopes, nor pursues anything better or more beautiful than what he sees and possesses; when human generations only live and die in the present, like the generations of leaves which shoot and fall, society dies also; its inherent greatness and strength, if it has any, serve only to prolong its prostration and agony. Gibbon wrote the history of Rome, from Augustus to the taking of Constantinople by Mahomet II., and he entitled it, ‘History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,’ and he was right; the Roman Empire occupied fifteen centuries in its fall; but throughout that long period it was continually on the decline, even while completing the conquest and regulating

the administration of the world. In that vast body there was no longer moral ambition or fecundity; the soul had departed. Either in collective society or in individual men, the future is the life of the soul.

“What will be the future of our present society? No one can tell; neither do I believe that any human eye is sufficiently piercing to unravel it. But, beyond all doubt, we have participated in one of the most expanded movements of human ambition, in one of the boldest impulses towards the future, of which the world has ever been the theatre. Our age may be reproached with many faults, but certainly not with apathy of mind and heart. God forbid that I should look upon this merit as sufficient to cure and repair all our mistakes! The future is not secured to men simply because they ardently desire and pursue it. Ideas, projects, and hopes may spring up and crowd in their souls without substantial accomplishment, and may leave them far from the goal they aspire to reach. It is little to think, to imagine, to dream, to desire; severer duties are imposed on us, and we are called to a greater share of responsibility in our own destinies. We must learn to act, to wait; to act and wait with intelli-

gence, perseverance, and virtue, with submission to those laws of God under the control of which our lives pass, and our activity displays itself. Already more than once, in the history of the human race, brilliant hopes have miscarried, great aspirations have led to nothing, epochs teeming with productive seeds, have remained barren through man's fault. Are we destined to undergo one of these sad and humiliating reverses? This is the problem we have to solve. Let us not flatter ourselves that we can escape from its burden; if decline is our lot, we have made it for ourselves; it has not descended to us from our fathers. To us will appertain the honour of carrying to a still greater height the civilization they have bequeathed to us, or the shame of suffering it to fall and perish in our hands. Many tremble lest this melancholy fate should be reserved for us; and in support of these apprehensions they allege the futility of our efforts during sixty years to establish amongst us that system of legal order and political liberty, that active and efficacious intervention of the country in its government, which in 1789 was incontestably the wish and hope of our fathers. We have sought this system through every description of path, under the most opposing standards; we have

caught a glimpse of, and have reached it; we have held it in possession; it fell; can it ever, after so many trials, revive again from this mischief and misfortune?

“I reject all pretence of raising this formidable complaint alone and pre-eminently against the constitutional system. What system has not failed during the last sixty years? Absolute power fell like liberty, the conquests of war like those of peace. It would ill become opposite systems to treat each other with mutual haughtiness; they have all undergone the same reverses; they have all, in turn, been enveloped and carried away in the storm which for sixty years has swept over Europe. Seek for other weapons than its fall against the constitutional system; it could return with interest the blows it would thus receive. Amongst all the systems it endured the longest.

“Even in falling it has not entirely lost its empire, and some of its best benefits have survived its errors and reverses. Since 1848 we have witnessed the most formidable crises; we have passed through I know not how many revolutions, contests, and intestine commotions. Why have not these commotions, contests, and revolutions produced an infinitely

greater degree of mischief? Why have they been restrained within narrower limits than public alarm anticipated? Is it not evidently through the surviving influence of the system of legal order, of justice and liberty, which preceded them? The principles and examples of that system vindicated their power in the midst of its ruins: it has verified the beautiful saying of the Indian sage: ‘Be like the sandal-wood, which perfumes the axe that strikes it.’

“There are two powers which I am far from holding as infallible, but which deserve to be often believed in and always listened to: — the masses and the chosen spirits, the instinctive sentiment of society and the reflective thought of its natural heads. Let both be interrogated. The masses are indifferent and silent; they have readily resigned their pretensions and habits; they have experienced the abuses of liberty and the necessity of repose; but they are, at the bottom, less changed than they appear. The middle classes have not ceased to esteem and desire the securities of the constitutional system; and amongst these multitudes, so submissive and restrained, the same passions and dreams are in perpetual fermentation. Leave the masses alone. Inquire the thoughts and dispositions, I will not say of

the men long enlisted under a flag which honour commands them to guard, but of the young and ardent spirits now entering into the world. Can it be believed that they have renounced those hopes of political activity and freedom which filled the lives of their fathers? Enter their ranks and listen to them. They come from all points of the horizon: they differ in origin, profession, social position, creeds, and tendencies. All the old parties have amongst them descendants and representatives. We shall find there conservatives, liberals, democrats, and republicans. We shall hear discussions on the vices and merits of the constitutional system, as it was understood and practised amongst us. Some reproach it with having been too impatient; others accuse it of too much timidity: others, again, charge it with having transformed itself into a parliamentary system incompatible with our national manners and traditions. Both for political liberty and representative government they require new forms and conditions. These are serious questions, substantial discords which might become important. But above all these questions and discords one common sentiment rises and soars,—an aspiration for political life, a desire to march and advance in the same paths of

liberal civilization in which, during a long series of ages, successive generations of Frenchmen have alternated so many attempts, wanderings, hesitations, halts, returns, and falls ; and, balancing one against the other, so many conquests and advances.

“If I turn my eyes from France upon Europe, and from nations upon governments, I find in all quarters the same tendency, and the same fact under the most opposite appearances. In countries and under systems diametrically distinct from each other, in the midst of contrary events, despite the necessities and embarrassments of contemporaneous policy, and in most unequal degrees, the same spirit of social ambition, of general development, of expanded sympathy and liberties, possesses and urges all Europe in advance. And this spirit, which we call new, is identically the same which for fifteen centuries has animated and fertilized European society. It is the spirit of the past as well as of the future. It hovers over our misfortunes and our faults, exactly as it came to us through the misfortunes and faults of our ancestors.

“Let us turn from our discouragements and blindnesses, our interested reserves and self-complacencies. Let us be serious and sincere, and look on things as

they exist, at home and abroad. We have fancied ourselves better than we are; we have forgotten the evil inherent in our nature, and consequently the necessity of struggling manfully and incessantly against the enemy we carry within us. We have fancied ourselves more powerful than we are: we have mistaken not only the limits of our power, but the rights of the Sovereign Power which governs us and the world. We have disregarded the eternal laws which God has made for us, and we have formally pretended to substitute in their places our own ephemeral institutions. We have persuaded ourselves that we are more advanced than we really are in the paths of civilization and liberty. Occupied in the great and rugged task of founding a free government, we did not sufficiently estimate the difficulties and conditions. We flattered ourselves too readily that we could do this alone. We presumed too much upon our knowledge and our strength. We thought too lightly of the general ignorance and anarchy which knocked at our doors, of the time required to enlighten that ignorance, and of the allies that were wanted to struggle against that anarchy. These are mistakes we may acknowledge without reproach to any one, for we all fell into

them alike. These are the true causes of our errors and reverses. They contain matter to abate our pride, but nothing to annihilate our hope. Our disease is one of those which cure themselves when they are thoroughly recognized and sharply felt. Let us persevere in our object; it is the just right, and for fifteen centuries has been the laborious effort of Christian Europe. Let us neither be surprised nor alarmed at the obstacles, delays, turnings, and windings of the road; success, in great undertakings, is always more difficult and more dearly purchased than human thoughts imagine; and God, who promises all the rest to those who begin by asking for wisdom, will not exempt them from endurance and combat. Above all, let us hasten to emerge from the old tracks into which we have been driven by the revolutionary spirit; they would ever lead us into the same whirlpools."

CHAP. XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

SHALL we be found equal to this imperious necessity? Shall we escape from the ruts of revolution to walk in the ways of justice and liberty according to right? This is the question of our epoch; a question of external as well as of internal policy, equally civil and religious, yesterday French, to-day Italian, and to-morrow European. Whatever may be its special object or theatre, wherever this question arises, it involves the fate of all Christian society; the contest lies between the spirit of revolution and the spirit of Christianity. The essential feature of the Christian spirit is respect for rule and right; for all rights, the rights of God as well as those of man, of governments as of nations, of the past as of the future. The dominant and permanent character of the revolutionary spirit is, on the contrary, passion; at one time the passion of license, at another the passion

of a fixed and exclusive idea, before which all the rights that interfere with it vanish, and to which all means are suitable for its gratification, cunning as well as violence; at one time menace, at another seduction; to-day an attack on power, to-morrow a contempt for liberty. Italy at this moment presents both spectacles. In the kingdom of Naples, after expelling the King, a foreign army makes war against I know not exactly what portion, but certainly a considerable portion of the Neapolitan people, which looks upon the Piedmontese as foreigners, and has no desire for their rule. To put down its resistance, prisoners of war are exiled, imprisoned, and shot, and towns are set on fire. In the Roman question these proceedings are not current; France covers Rome with her shield. Other ways are tried; they appeal to the Catholic public, to the Pope himself: an attempt is made to intimidate him — what do I say? — to persuade him. He is urged to submit to the times, to resign himself to necessity, to accept the transformations proposed to him. They fear to excite too much commotion by laying violent hands on him; they call upon him to abdicate, to spare his enemies the embarrassment of dethroning him.

I am nothing in the government, of my own

country ; it belongs not to me to give it advice ; but I may address myself to my country and its government, to point out to them the errors and dangers towards which, in my opinion, a complaisant adhesion and an improvident yielding to this policy, alternately coarse and hypocritical, would infallibly lead them ; and which, far indeed from promoting, compromises the good cause in Italy, and plunges Christian society into a lamentable perturbation, the certain prelude to an anarchy which we may soon see alternately unchained or compressed within unimaginable fetters. It depends on honest, sensible men, and true Christians to rescue themselves and their children from these melancholy chances. From all our experiences and sufferings, whether general or individual, there remains to us this grand result, that the cherished and necessary truths of our time are disengaged from the clouds through which they had to pass, and are palpable to almost every eye. On the rights of human conscience and liberty, on the justice due to all, on the duties of sympathy which all may claim, we are now in assured possession of maxims of Christian origin as well as of philosophical acquirement, predominating maxims

although still sometimes disputed, and which even those who dispute them could not long violate with impunity. In the midst of all the dissensions which continue to agitate us, there is now in the great majority of minds as much light, and in the great majority of hearts as much equity, as is necessary to satisfy the social wants and legitimate desires of our epoch. But these lights and good intentions avail nothing if confined within themselves. They must pass into the practice of life and the conduct of public affairs. The influence of the public upon government, whether to direct or restrain, can alone secure this result. Christians or philosophers, Catholics or Protestants, Conservatives or Liberals, whether as regards internal or external questions, the relations of the State with the Church or with other States,—it is necessary that all who in their hearts respect common rights, and wish for liberty according to right, should have the courage to proclaim openly this tutelary respect, and then to lay down a rule for their own conduct which may also become the rule of authority. Under these conditions, false ideas and anarchical or tyrannical passions will be rendered powerless ; Christian society, religious and civil, will

be saved. But let us not deceive ourselves; it is in danger: and the provident union, the free speech, and the active courage of sound minds and honest hearts are indispensable to its preservation.

THE END.

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